

Israel denies any contact with Libya

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel strongly denied reports that Foreign Minister Shimon Peres is promoting an Israeli-Libyan detente reminiscent of his role in the Iran-gate scandal, newspapers said Friday. U.S. officials suspected that Israel saw a strategic interest in improved relations with Libya. Washington Post columnist Jim Hoagland wrote this week. But several Israeli newspapers cited foreign ministry officials as saying Mr. Peres was not maintaining any contact with Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, not directly, and not through a third party. Mr. Hoagland compared a thaw with Libya to Israel's part in exchanging arms for hostages in Iran under President Ronald Reagan in 1985. By reaching out to Iranian "moderates," Israel could offset more hostile elements. He cited an occupied Jerusalem visit by Libyan pilgrims to Muslim holy shrines in June that ended prematurely. The trip was organized by Israeli arms dealer Yaakov Nimrodi, the man behind the initial U.S. arms shipment to Iran. Mr. Hoagland suggested that Mr. Peres was maintaining contacts with Libyan officials through intermediaries. Mr. Peres never denied his involvement in the pilgrims' visit. "The Libya after the visit is different than the Libya before," he said at the time. The daily Haaretz quoted Israeli officials as saying that Mr. Dennis Ross, the American peace talks coordinator, cautioned Mr. Peres last week against contacts with Libya.

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Israeli soldiers wound 10 in Gaza

GAZA CITY, Occupied Gaza Strip (AFP) — Israeli soldiers shot and wounded 10 Palestinians, including five children, in the occupied Gaza Strip Friday. Palestinian sources said. The worst incidents occurred in the Shifa refugee camp, where nine Palestinians were shot, they said. On Thursday, Israeli soldiers shot and wounded six Palestinians, including four children, in the same camp (Al-Azwaq, page 2).

Kaddoumi favours PLO power-sharing

PARIS (AFP) — Farouk Kaddoumi, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) top foreign policy official, said Friday he favoured more power-sharing in the organisation. "We should improve the circulation of information and take into account different opinions within the PLO," he said. "We should ensure that decisions are more collegial," he told AFP in an interview. He emphasised that even with the present structure, decisions were taken collectively. Mr. Kaddoumi, who was ending a two-day visit here, had been asked to comment on a recent call for a "collective leadership" for the PLO by Haidar Abdul Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to Middle East peace talks.

Indonesia denies ties with Israel

SINGAPORE (AP) — Indonesia Friday denied reports it was establishing diplomatic relations with Israel. "That is not at all true," said Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas. "We have no intention of establishing relations with them," Mr. Alatas was commenting on news reports from Israel saying the Indonesian ambassador in Singapore had been asked to Israel to hold negotiations. Mr. Alatas said he had gone to a conference in Vienna and sat at the same table with an Israeli minister. He said the chance event had been portrayed wrongly as a meeting between Indonesian and Israeli government representatives. "When I only exchanged one sentence with him," Mr. Alatas said.

Worst locust threat in sub-Saharan Africa

CAIRO (AP) — Rains that promised drought relief to much of sub-Saharan Africa are generating swarms of locusts that threaten calamity for much of the continent. The United Nations said Friday. Edouard Saouma, Lebanese director-general of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), said the locust menace is the worst since 1987. In addition to Northern Africa, swarms of the marauding insects have been sighted across the Arabian Peninsula and as far east as Pakistan. The FAO said. And with the onset of the Indian monsoon, it said that country's western Rajasthan area probably will be infested by the end of July.

Plane crash kills 53 in China

PEKING (AP) — A passenger plane crashed shortly after takeoff Friday in northern China, killing at least 53 people, the official Xinhua news agency reported. A French tourist was among the dead, Xinhua said, without giving a name. A total of 108 passengers and five crew members were on the Beijing-bound plane when it crashed at the Yinchuan airport, the Xinhua said. Yinchuan, capital of the Ningxia Hui autonomous region, is about 900 kilometres west of Beijing. The report did not say what kind of plane it was or name the airline. No explanation was given for the crash.

Yeltsin: Parliament threatens democracy

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin, in a fierce attack on parliament, accused the conservative legislature Friday of threatening democracy by trying to take more power. A statement his press services denounced Mr. Yeltsin's attempts to have the minister and the mayor of Moscow sacked and said Mr. Yeltsin would disregard its resolutions (see page 10).

Fateh endorses confederation, insists on Jerusalem on agenda

Palestinians ready to skip preliminary stages in peace talks

Combined agency despatches

TUNIS — Fateh, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) largest faction, Friday endorsed a confederation between Jordan and the Palestinians as a way of ending the deadlock in Middle East peace talks.

But a statement issued by the group's Revolutionary Council emphasised that such a confederation should be between "the state of Jordan and the state of Palestine."

It was unclear if such a condition would be acceptable to Israel, which has repeatedly rejected the Palestinians' call for an independent homeland.

The council meeting drew about 100 Fateh leaders for four days of talks. The concluding statement was carried by the Palestinian news agency Wafa.

The idea of a confederation between Jordan and the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip has been floated since mid-month by some Israeli and Palestinian leaders as a way of breaking the impasse in the U.S.-backed peace talks.

Both sides believe that some linkage would allow the negotiators to bypass discussion of an "interim" solution and go right to a final settlement on the territories' future.

It also could circumvent difficulties over the city of Jerusalem.

Palestinians want Arab East Jerusalem as the capital of their would-be state; Israel refuses to discuss the redrawing of the city.

According to the statement carried by Wafa, the Fateh Council urged enhancing "the future relations between the Palestinian people and the Jordanian people on the basis of confederation."

Senior Fateh officials said the council also urged the PLO leadership to activate six working groups set up with Jordan earlier this month to work out details of the proposed confederation.

The statement said the council believed no Middle East peace settlement could be reached without a resolution of the status of Jerusalem.

Fateh also demanded that East Jerusalem be put on the agenda of the peace talks.

The United States has been trying to persuade the Palestinians to put aside the issue of Jerusalem until discussions begin on a permanent solution after an interim autonomy agreement goes into effect.

The Fateh decision said that Jerusalem as "capital of the state of Palestine" must be put on the peace talks agenda.

It also insisted that Israel accept U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

"The total Israeli withdrawal from all Arab and Palestinian

occupied territories and the recognition of the Palestinians' national rights is the only foundation for peace and stability in the Middle East," the statement said.

It also urged Palestinians in the occupied territories to continue their uprising against Israeli occupation.

"The council decides to provide all support and means to step up our people's uprising and the valiant resistance until victory is achieved and occupation is defeated," the statement said.

In Amman PLO officials said Palestinians, eager for agreement with Israel on interim self-rule in the occupied territories, are ready to skip preliminary stages.

The current peace process speaks of an Israeli-Palestinian agreement on a five-year period of self-rule with talks on the final status of the territories starting in the third year.

"In view of the difficulty in arriving at a concept and the landmarks of the final stage, let's cut short all the roads and negotiate a phased Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho," Saleh Ra'fat, Palestine Central Committee member, told Reuters.

"The PLO is ready to accept a disengagement treaty, starting in its first stage with Gaza and parts of the West Bank leading to a phased implementation of U.N. Resolution 242 that calls for full Israeli withdrawal from the terri-

ties occupied in 1967," he added.

Palestinians were expected to offer the new proposals to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher when he tours the region from Aug. 1-5 to try and break the deadlocked Middle East peace talks.

"To save the peace process after it has reached a dead end is why we are raising now the issue of bypassing the interim stages to the final stage," PLO Executive Committee member Sleiman Najah said.

Israel and the Palestinians are still wrangling over the extent of self-rule. Palestinians want Arab Jerusalem to be placed under their jurisdiction during the interim stage to ensure it becomes the capital of their future independent state.

Israel says Jerusalem is its "eternal capital."

Syria urged U.S. President Bill Clinton Friday to emulate former President Dwight Eisenhower and persuade Israel to trade land for peace.

Referring to the 1956 Suez war by Israel, Britain and France against Egypt, Al Baath newspaper, organ of the ruling Baath Party, recalled that Mr. Eisenhower had urged Israeli Premier David Ben Gurion to

(Continued on page 10)

U.N. starts long-term watch of Iraqi arms programmes

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — U.N. inspectors flew in Friday for a routine check of Iraq's nuclear sites after Baghdad finally bowed to U.N. pressure for long-term monitoring of its weapons programmes, avoiding a showdown with the Western allies.

The 15-member team was headed by Maurizio Zifferero, deputy director of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The team will inspect nuclear facilities and also prepare for an airlift of about 40 kilograms of irradiated nuclear fuel to Russia as part of the U.N. effort to prevent a revival of Baghdad's nuclear weapons programme.

Mr. Zifferero, an Italian, said the airlift will start in September and last until March.

Officials of the U.N. Special Commission which is overseeing the elimination of Iraq's non-conventional weapons have said a special plane was being adapted to ensure that even in the event of a crash, there would be no leakage of radiation.

The airlift would be the first of its kind as such cargo was transported by ships in the past.

"Lots of preparation is needed," Mr. Zifferero said. "We will start actually filling in the transfer cards and shipping containers from the middle of September. It is a very complicated process."

Iraq on Thursday officially confirmed for the first time that it had accepted long-term monitoring of its weapons programmes. But the United Nations remained wary of the intentions of a country that has repeatedly resisted terms of the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire.

Another team of U.N. inspectors was leaving New York for Baghdad Friday with surveillance cameras to be installed at two controversial missile testing sites, Yawm Al Azim and Al Rafah, south of Baghdad.

Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. Commission, told the U.N. Security Council Thursday that his five days of talks with senior Iraqi officials produced a declaration from Iraq that it accepts the council's resolution on long-term monitoring and an agreement to hold technical talks with the United Nations on the outstanding weapons issues.

However, the council continues to refuse to link the talks

The high-level technical talks will begin in New York in late August, he said, and "the long-term solution (on monitoring and verification) will be one of the topics to be covered, including the question of the activation of these cameras."

Security Council President David Hannay of Britain welcomed the agreement, which he said is "endorsed by the council."

The council considered the terms "satisfactory interim arrangements," he said, noting that Iraq's promise to warn the U.N. commission in advance about any use of the sites to enable the United Nations to monitor activity there had been a major factor in the council's acceptance of the arrangement.

The council welcomes the Iraqi government's acceptance of Resolution 715 dealing with "long-term monitoring and verification ... and welcomes the decision to hold those talks and hopes that they will be fruitful," Mr. Hannay said.

However, the council continues to refuse to link the talks

Major wins confidence vote linked to Maastricht Treaty

LONDON (Agencies) — Prime Minister John Major won a vote of confidence and parliamentary backing for a treaty of European union Friday, facing down rebels in his party with the threat of an immediate national election.

Mr. Major won the confidence motion 339-299 in the house of commons. The government earlier prevailed 339-301 against a last-gasp attempt by the Labour Party to force it to sign up to a charter of worker's rights as part of the Maastricht Treaty.

The votes cleared the way for Britain's formal ratification of the treaty, once the courts dispose of a private suit filed earlier this week.

"The one thing I wasn't going to do ... was to hand over the running of this treaty to a Labour government," said William Cash, a leading Tory treaty opponent who finally supported Mr. Major on Friday.

Winding up a daylong debate, Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd declared: "This the last speech in the last debate on the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty. I was fairly sure of applause on that proposition at least."

Mr. Major said it was time for parliament to ratify the treaty of which its 11 partners in the European Community (EC) have already endorsed. Arguments about Britain's place in Europe have divided both the main parties, and contributed to the downfall of Margaret Thatcher in 1990.

"I am not prepared to let it poison the political atmosphere any longer," Mr. Major told a Rowdy House, referring to Conservative Party divisions over the treaty he negotiated at Maastricht in the Netherlands in 1991.

"The bill must be lanced and it must be lanced today," he added. Conservative rebels faced the choice of getting into line or forcing a national election that the party — running last in opinion polls — would be hard-pressed to win.

They returned to the fold Friday when it became clear Major would carry out his threat to call a snap general election.

Opinion polls show the Conservatives, hit by a series of crises and U-turns in the last year, are lying only third behind Labour and the minority Liberal Democrats.

All parties appeared relieved that the grueling parliamentary ratification process was over, although it still has to survive a challenge in the high court that could delay the process for several months.

Asked to comment on the vote as he left the chamber, the heavy-lidded premier smiled and said, "The figures speak for themselves."

Only Britain and Germany among the 12 EC members have not yet ratified the treaty, which requires unanimity.

The government faces a severe test in a by-election in the south coast town of Christchurch next Thursday, when it is expected to be defeated in one of its safest seats by the Liberal Democrats, cutting its parliamentary majority to 17.

Charles Kennedy, the Liberal Democrats' chairman, said it had been confirmed in the last two days of dramatic parliamentary action that the ruling party was split and Mr. Major's authority was seriously damaged.

"Next week comes Christchurch — let's see what they bring," he said.

3,000 said to have fled south Iraq marshes

GENEVA (AP) — More than 3,000 people have fled apparent government offensives in Iraq's southern marshes and are escaping into Iran at the rate of 150 per day, a spokeswoman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said Friday.

Spokeswoman Marie Okabe said a further 15,000 Shiite Muslims were reportedly waiting to cross the border into a remote part of western Iran. Supplies of food and water were said to be short in temperatures topping 50 degrees centigrade, she said.

Ms. Okabe said refugees interviewed by UNHCR officials said they had fled shelling and artillery attacks by government forces. She said details were sketchy and it was unclear whether the refugees were Shiite rebels or women and children fleeing in fear of the alleged offensives.

Meanwhile, a senior official with the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) said continuing economic sanctions against the Baghdad regime had caused tens of thousands of excess deaths among young children and was plunging the general population into ever-worse poverty.

Thomas Ekvall, UNICEF's representative in Iraq, told a news conference that the agency's own programme to provide aid to innocent civilians was threatened by an acute shortage of funds. He said UNICEF had received only about seven per cent of an appeal launched in April for \$86 million.

"There is a serious humanitarian situation and the funding for the programme to address that situation is not there," he said. Mr. Ekvall said the infant mortality rate had tripled as a result of sanctions since the war to a rate of 92 per 1,000.

In a recent report the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organisation warned that the country was on the fringe of famine.

Iran's news agency reported government shelling in the marshes and a mass exodus over the border. The UNHCR report was the first independent confirmation of the refugee flow, but spokeswoman Okabe stressed the agency had no reliable information about the attacks.

Iranian attacks

Iranian warplanes bombed Kurdish rebel bases in northeastern Iraq Thursday while a large force of Revolutionary Guards attacked across the border.



A Lebanese villager searches Friday through what remains of his belongings in the rubble of his house destroyed the day before by an Israeli air raid against Jarjah, South Lebanon (AFP photo)

Israel accuses Syrians of waging proxy war in Lebanon

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel accused Syria Friday of fighting a proxy war against Israel in Lebanon hoping to extract gains at deadlocked Middle East peace talks.

Guerrillas have killed six Israeli soldiers in July, the bloodiest month in nearly three years for Israel forces in Lebanon.

Deputy Defence Minister Mordechai Gur, asked if Syria used the guerrillas as proxies, said: "They certainly exploit the Lebanon front to attack us and also to push us on issues that are important to them in the peace process."

Israel and Syria have made little progress in nearly 21 months of peace talks. Syria demands total withdrawal from the Golan Heights seized by Israel in the 1967 war.

Israel would not discuss the extent of withdrawal unless assured of full peace including open borders, free trade and embassies.

On Thursday, pro-Iranian guerrillas stormed Israel's self-proclaimed South Lebanon "security zone" killing an Israeli soldier and defying two weeks of Israeli threats to retaliate for the killing of five Israeli soldiers on July 8 and 9.

Israel, despite hitting back hard with artillery and helicopters on Thursday, appeared intent on avoiding a massive ground assault.

The guerrillas, opposed to the U.S.-brokered peace talks, hope to scuttle them by provoking an all-out war with Israel.

Several rockets fell early Fri-

day on the far north of Israel but did no damage, military sources said.

Israeli troops returned the fire, they said without elaborating.

On Thursday, Israel moved large numbers of troop reinforcements into its "security zone" in southern Lebanon.

Ex-Defence Minister Ariel Sharon called on Israel to deliver an ultimatum to Syria warning that unless it halts the attacks in southern Lebanon the peace talks are off.

"We must send a real ultimatum to Syria: No peace negotiations unless terrorist operations are halted in Lebanon," the hard-line right-winger told Voice of Israel radio.

He also urged the army to launch a series of raids north of the "security zone" to quell the attacks.

"These operations do not need to be on a large scale. The main thing is to put the terrorists on the defensive," he said, accusing Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of "indecision."

Israel's chief negotiator with Lebanon at the peace talks, Uri Lubrani, echoed Mr. Gur in an interview published Friday.

"The president of Syria, (Hafez Al Assad), sits where he sits rubbing his hands and others do the work of attacking Israel for him," Mr. Lubrani told the daily newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth.

"As long as the Golan Heights are untouched, Assad doesn't care who hurts us in the security zone. He believes that following pressure in the field we will be more prepared for all sorts of

compromises," Mr. Lubrani said.

Israel warned Syria two weeks ago — via U.S. officials — to restrain guerrillas by blocking weapons transfers from Iran.

Mr. Gur dismissed recent Syrian warnings that Israeli action against Lebanon would be seen as a move against Syria.

"That Syrian threat ... does not influence our decisions. What is influential is to be sure that when we take the decision it is indeed the ... right date," the "right approach," he told army radio.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is due in the Middle East on July 31 in a bid by Washington to edge forward Israel's talks with Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians.

Hizbollah claims achievement

A leader of the Shiite Muslim Hizbollah said Friday that the militia has seized the military initiative from Israel in South Lebanon.

Sheikh Naim Qassem, second in command in of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah (Party of God) also repeated the group's call for Lebanon to withdraw from the Middle East peace process.

"Yesterday's onslaught and the lessons it entailed have proved that we have wrested the initiative from the enemy," Sheikh Qassem said.

He added: "We shall continue our resistance, irrespective of the peace negotiations, until the enemy is totally dislodged from its so-called security zone."

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2 more arrested in alleged New York bombing plots

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE, New Jersey (Agencies) — The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has arrested an Egyptian man wanted in connection with an alleged plot to blow up the United Nations building and busy New York City commuter tunnels, and a man accused of harbouring him.

Mattarawi Mohammad Saleh, 44, also known as Wahid, was arrested Thursday night at a seaside motel in North Wildwood in southern New Jersey, FBI Agent James C. Esposito said Friday.

Another Egyptian national, 31-year-old Ashraf Mohammad, was also arrested there for allegedly harbouring Mr. Saleh. The two were held overnight in the Cape May County jail and were to be arraigned later Friday in Camden, New Jersey, said FBI spokesman Jim Laub.

The arrest brought the number of alleged bombing plot conspirators in custody to 11. Prosecutors say they have hours of surveillance tapes with plotters discussing bombing targets and explosives-making efforts.

A longtime informant helped authorities break up what they called a ring of fundamentalist Muslims with international connections.

Mr. Saleh has been a fugitive since he was charged along with eight others in the conspiracy, the FBI said in a statement.

Eight people were arrested

June 24 after federal agents raided a New York City house where five men allegedly were mixing explosives. They were accused of plotting to bomb the United Nations, the Holland and Lincoln tunnels beneath the Hudson River and a federal building housing the FBI.

Mr. Saleh was indicted under the name Wahid although he remained at large. Another man was arrested June 30 in Philadelphia. And a new indictment July 14 added one of the men already under arrest in the Feb. 26 World Trade Centre bombing to the list.

Dispute over reward

A U.S. government plan to offer up to \$2 million for information on a missing suspect in the trade centre bombing has been stymied since mid-April by a row over what agency should foot the bill, the New York Times reported Friday.

The disagreement between the State Department and the FBI has meant the United States has still not offered a reward for information about Ramzi Ahmad Yousef, the newspaper said, the quoting officials.

Mr. Yousef is believed to have fled to Iraq soon after the Feb. 26 attack. The New York Times said the officials said privately they feared the United States may have squandered a crucial chance

to track down Mr. Yousef before he disappeared.

Authorities have described Mr. Yousef as a central figure in the bombing plot and he has been the subject of an international manhunt for nearly four months. But while the State Department and the FBI have agreed a big award should be offered for his capture, each agency has insisted it is unable to provide it, the daily said.

The stand-off has left U.S. investigators and Congress members increasingly frustrated since the State Department first turned down an FBI request to provide the award, the newspaper said. The FBI is responsible for combating terrorism at home while the State Department is charged with fighting it abroad.

"This should never have been an issue," a congressional official told the newspaper in an interview Thursday. "This is a case in which a little common sense would have gone a long way."

A State Department official who insisted on anonymity said on Thursday night the department was trying to find a way to issue the reward. "We've just got to get this one sorted out," the official told the newspaper.

Congress first gave the secretary of state the power to issue up to \$1 million rewards in 1984. But the terms of the legislation, which

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Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Thursday meets with directors of public works departments in the Kingdom (Petra photo)

Majali orders reemployment of 180 public works employees

AMMAN (J.T.) — A total of 180 per diem workers dismissed by the Department of Public Works in Mafrqa last Monday are to be returned to their jobs, according to a decision by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali.

Al Ra'i Arabic daily said the decision was taken following a sit-in staged by the workers in front of the ministry building in Amman and at the department in Mafrqa in protest against their dismissal.

The prime minister discussed the issue during his visit Thursday to the Ministry of Public Works and ordered that they be returned to their jobs, the paper said.

The ministry had decided to lay-off these workers because it alleged they had been neglecting their duty on the one hand and because of sufficient allocations for the department in Mafrqa on the other, the report said.

Describing the decision as arbitrary and unjust, groups representing the dismissed workers lodged a protest with the ministry and staged the sit-ins, which drew the attention of the prime minister through Mafrqa Deputy Mohammad Abu Alim and Minister of Public Works and Housing Khalaf Hawari, said the report.

Mr. Abu Alim said that the premier was concerned about the fate of the dismissed workers and instructed the ministry to re-employ them.

According to the report, Dr. Majali had said that the workers should receive their pay in full and that guarantees must be given for their continued employment.

Mr. Abu Alim met with the workers' representatives urging them to fully shoulder their duty and display at spirit of cooperation with the Mafrqa Public Works Department.

Also Thursday, the prime minister met with directors of public

works departments around the Kingdom and urged them to tackle problems facing their departments through dialogue and cooperation.

Dr. Majali said participation in decision-making, defining problems and taking initiatives without fear would help obtain the best results.

He encouraged the directors to take initiatives and said their sincere and serious work in serving the public interest would make them a model for their employees, which would consequently increase and improve production.

The prime minister stressed the need to concentrate on priorities while preparing service projects.

He also called for encouraging research work and creativity of the civil servants in accordance with their responsibilities.

The meeting was attended by minister of Public Works and Housing Khalaf Al Hawari.

AMMAN (J.T.) — As of today (Saturday) meat imported by the Ministry of Supply and sold in the Kingdom will carry a red stamp; local meat will bear a blue stamp, according to a ministry announcement.

The announcement said the marks will be stamped by the Amman Municipality's slaughterhouse which slaughters imported sheep from Australia and other countries and animals by local livestock breeders.

Imported Australian fresh meat now sells for JD 2.6 to JD 2.75 per kilogramme and local meat sells for JD 4 to JD 6 per kilo.

Meanwhile, a delegation representing the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation concluded three days of talks with Jordanian government officials in Amman and left for home.

Australian embassy sources said that Australia is giving the municipality's slaughterhouse a meat chiller worth JD 200,000.

The chiller is to be installed before the end of 1993.

Last week the Ministry of Supply issued a ban on Bulgarian meat because of alleged reports that the Balkan state's cattle had been infected with the contagious hoof and mouth disease. But officials said that the ban would cause no hardship on consumers as the ministry had sufficient supplies of other imported meats.

Ministry to stamp imported, local meat

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Tawjihi results drop 2.1 per cent

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Tawjihi results announced Friday by Minister of Education and Higher Education Khaled Al Omari showed a 2.1 per cent decline in the number of successful students compared with last year's results.

Addressing a press conference, the minister said only 49.2 per cent of the 73,242 registered students passed the examination this year compared to 51.3 per cent last year.

Only 67,028 male and female students out of the registered total actually sat for the examination, and the total number of students who passed was 33,003, said Dr. Omari.

The students had sat for examinations in the literary, scientific, commercial, agricultural, industrial, nursing and hotel management courses.

According to the minister, out of the total registered Tawjihi students, 48,935 were regular students attending classes at private and public schools; the rest were studying at home.

The minister, who congratulated the successful students, announced that he would soon organise a ceremony to honour those who came first in their respective courses.

He also announced that the results of students of the Israeli-occupied West Bank schools would be published Monday, noting that those results are very close to the results of the students in Jordan.

The ministry has continued to supervise and organise examinations for the West Bank students despite Jordan's 1988 severance of administrative and legal ties with the occupied territory.

Meanwhile, the Council of Higher Education has endorsed a general plan for the distribution

of successful Tawjihi students wishing to pursue their higher education to state-run universities in the 1993-94 academic year.

Council sources said a total of 10,022 students will be accepted at the University of Jordan, Yarmouk University, Muta University and Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST).

The sources said the number of undergraduate acceptances this year will equal those of last year.

They said that 1,968 post graduate students will be accepted in these universities for masters and doctoral programmes.

house in Irbid and why he chose to go to the police.

According to the relative, the boy spent three days in Irbid under police protection before he was transferred to Amman police, who contacted his family three days later to hand him over.

"In any case, we are happy we have the boy back, and that is all that matters to us," Marwan said.

There was no immediate explanation as to why it took so long for police to return the boy or contact the family, which had gone on a wild-goose chase after registering a complaint with Zaqra police and consulting a diviner who said the boy was in Al Wihdat camp outside Amman.

The affair came to light when the family put a missing notice in local Arabic-language newspapers on Monday, July 12.

Concern over the welfare of the boy, the eldest of six siblings, mounted further with revelations that he was last seen in the company of "two strange men" in Zaqra market and mysterious telephone calls to contact numbers given in the advertisement asking whether the boy was found.

The Public Relations Department of the Public Security Department (PSD) said it had no details of the affair.

of family problems.

Other sources said police routine and procedures also prevented any given police station to act upon its own initiative to return missing children originating in areas beyond its jurisdiction.

"The concerned police station has to go through the proper channels and contact its counterpart in the area of residence of the child," said a source.

The Zaqra case was the third reported affair involving a missing child in the past three months. In the two earlier cases, a nine-year-old boy was found killed in a cemetery in Russeifa, northeast of Amman, and a close cousin was reported to have confessed to the murder; in another case, an eight-year-old girl was also found murdered after being raped in Aqaba, and a suspect was reported to have confessed to the crime.

Another "missing" case was advertised in local papers last month, but a man who answered an Irbid phone number given in an advertisement said the boy reported missing had returned home.

The man refused to give any details except that family problems were behind the disappearance.

Missing boy held in police 'red tape'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A 14-year-old reported missing two weeks ago had showed up at Irbid police station on the same day saying he was lost, but police procedures took six days before he was returned to his family, relatives said Friday.

"The boy is safe and sound and back with his family," a relative, who identified himself only as Marwan, told the Jordan Times when reached by telephone Friday. "He was with Irbid police for three days and then spent another three days with Amman police before we got him back."

Samer Mohammad Musa, who "disappeared" on Friday, July 9, while on an errand in Zaqra market where his father Mohammad Musa runs a locksmith shop, had a family tiff earlier in the day and had left for his uncle's house in Irbid, the relative said.

"The boy got lost in Irbid and surrendered himself to Irbid police the same evening," Marwan said. The boy was not available to talk to the Jordan Times Friday.

Marwan said the boy had identified himself and provided all details of his background to Irbid police. It was not clear why the boy did not go to his uncle's

house in Irbid and why he chose to go to the police.

According to the relative, the boy spent three days in Irbid under police protection before he was transferred to Amman police, who contacted his family three days later to hand him over.

"In any case, we are happy we have the boy back, and that is all that matters to us," Marwan said.

There was no immediate explanation as to why it took so long for police to return the boy or contact the family, which had gone on a wild-goose chase after registering a complaint with Zaqra police and consulting a diviner who said the boy was in Al Wihdat camp outside Amman.

The affair came to light when the family put a missing notice in local Arabic-language newspapers on Monday, July 12.

Concern over the welfare of the boy, the eldest of six siblings, mounted further with revelations that he was last seen in the company of "two strange men" in Zaqra market and mysterious telephone calls to contact numbers given in the advertisement asking whether the boy was found.

The Public Relations Department of the Public Security Department (PSD) said it had no details of the affair.



Samer Mohammad Musa

But informed security sources said police could have been investigating possibilities of child abuse before returning the boy to the family.

"The usual procedure in such cases involves an investigation whether the child was subject to abuse at home before he or she is returned to the family," said a security source, who preferred anonymity.

The source, however, could not say whether the procedure was followed in the case of Samer, who was earlier described by relatives as not having any record

of family problems.

Other sources said police routine and procedures also prevented any given police station to act upon its own initiative to return missing children originating in areas beyond its jurisdiction.

"The concerned police station has to go through the proper channels and contact its counterpart in the area of residence of the child," said a source.

The Zaqra case was the third reported affair involving a missing child in the past three months. In the two earlier cases, a nine-year-old boy was found killed in a cemetery in Russeifa, northeast of Amman, and a close cousin was reported to have confessed to the murder; in another case, an eight-year-old girl was also found murdered after being raped in Aqaba, and a suspect was reported to have confessed to the crime.

Another "missing" case was advertised in local papers last month, but a man who answered an Irbid phone number given in an advertisement said the boy reported missing had returned home.

The man refused to give any details except that family problems were behind the disappearance.

Press department to sue new weekly; editor says paper may sue minister

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Department of Press and Publication is taking a recently established Arabic language weekly to court for allegedly violating the Press and Publication Law, the newspaper and Ministry of Information sources said Friday.

The department is suing Al-Bilad weekly for publishing news reports that "harm national unity and security," that violating Article 40 of the Press and Publication Law which came into effect in May this year, the sources said.

The paper however "might" counter the government's case against it by suing Minister of Information, Ma'an Abu Nowar for allegedly "threatening and levelling insults at" the chairman of its board of directors Nayef Al-Toureh during a meeting that took place at the ministry of information in the presence of the Director of the Press and Publication Department, Issa Al-Jahmani, earlier this month, Al-Bilad Senior Editor Mohammad Tomaleh told the Jordan Times

Friday.

In a letter addressed to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Thursday and made available to the Jordan Times by Al-Bilad Friday, Mr. Toureh claimed Dr. Abu Nowar "bluntly and illegally interfered" in the affairs of the newspaper, in the first edition of which appeared on July 7.

"I announce my astonishment at, and condemnation of the aggressive way in which (the minister) talked to me," during the meeting which took place at the official request of Dr. Abu Nowar and Mr. Jahmani, Mr. Toureh said in the letter.

The minister's "warnings" to Mr. Toureh "included direct threats," the letter claimed.

"These are absolute lies," Dr. Abu Nowar told the Jordan Times Friday. He said Mr. Toureh's claims are completely false and that he made no threats against him.

The minister said he merely advised Mr. Toureh to obey the law and that Mr. Toureh was eventually "very receptive" to the advice even though Mr. Toureh claimed he had walked

out of the meeting in expression of his anger at the minister's remarks.

"That did not happen," Dr. Abu Nowar said.

Dr. Abu Nowar said Mr. Toureh had agreed with him during the meeting on the need to follow the law and expressed appreciation for and understanding of the advice he offered him.

Al-Bilad's editor denied allegations that his paper, an independent weekly with a declared capital of JD 7,500 had violated the law or "harm national unity and security," in what it has reported in the two editions it issued since its presses started rolling earlier this month.

Mr. Toureh called on the prime minister to correct the actions of the Ministry of Information which he alleged have "deviated from the democratic orientation of the country."

Dr. Abu Nowar said however that his ministry has been committed to the freedom of the press and "encourages" constructive criticism that respects the law. He said Mr. Toureh's claims are completely groundless.

Strategy seminar to focus on water issues in Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — A seminar on a national strategy for the protection of the environment in Jordan will be organised Monday at the Professional Association Complex, according to an announcement Friday.

Marwan Tell, of the Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) which is organising the meeting, said delegates representing the ministries of Water, Energy, Agriculture, Tourism, Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment along with the Department of Housing will take part in the discussion.

Working papers to be reviewed at the seminar, which will be opened by Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Mohammad Al-Farhan, will focus on water, energy, minerals, the atmosphere, agriculture and housing, said Mr. Tell.

Emphasis, he said, will be placed on water supplies, waste and contamination of water resources in Jordan.

Questions related to issuing

licences for artesian wells in Jordan, leakage in the old water networks and unorthodox uses of water will be reviewed in the papers, he said.

Mr. Tell said 79 per cent of the country's water supplies are being used for irrigation, 20 per cent for domestic use and one per cent for industry.

The amounts for domestic use can be boosted to 42 per cent and for industry to six per cent if farmers adopt drip irrigation methods to save on water consumption, said Mr. Tell.

Recent studies on the performance of the waste water treatment plant at Khirbet Al-Samra, 39 kilometres northeast of Amman, and the resultant treated water, estimated at 120,000 cubic metres daily, will also come under scrutiny, he said.

Mr. Tell said legislation on the environment backed by a data bank providing information about such matters can help planners and decision-makers protect the country's environment.



CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE: Ministry of Planning Secretary General Safwan Touqan and South Korean Ambassador to Jordan Han Li Thursday sign an agreement to implement a cultural and scientific programme from now and until 1995. The agreement provides for cooperation in the education, higher education, health, sports, youth, information, social development and tourism fields. The two sides agreed to exchange visits

by educational delegations, researchers, teachers and students on scholarships and to exchange books and organise joint exhibitions. They will also exchange information about primary health care, infectious diseases and exchange television and radio programmes on health and social matters and expertise related to tourism, traditional handicraft, special education for the handicapped, youth and sports.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent congratulates Oman, Egypt

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Thursday sent a cable to Sultan Qaboos Ben Sa'ed of Oman congratulating him on his country's Nabha (renaissance) anniversary. Wishing Sultan Qaboos continued good health and happiness and the Omani people further progress and prosperity, Prince Hassan commended Jordanian-Omani relations and voiced pride in them. The Crown Prince sent a similar cable to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to congratulate him on the June Revolution anniversary.

Trade officials in Lebanon for talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Bassam Al-Saket Thursday started a three-day official visit to Lebanon during which he will hold talks with Lebanese officials on ways to bolster economic and commercial cooperation between the two countries. Dr. Saket is accompanied on the visit by a delegation comprising Jordan's Ambassador to Lebanon Fakhr Abu Taleb and Director of the ministry's Economic Cooperation Department Assem Al-Hindawi.

Lawyers head for Baghdad to meet counterparts

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the Jordan Bar Association (JBA) left Amman for Baghdad Friday on a week-long visit to Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi Bar Association. JBA Vice-President Ziad Al-Khasawneh said the visit aims to enhance cooperation between the two associations and to exchange views on legislation governing the profession in Jordan and Iraq. A series of meetings will be held between officials from the two associations in the future with the objective of enhancing Arab cooperation, Mr. Khasawneh said.

Panel prepares for International Family Year

AMMAN (Petra) — A national committee drawing plans for the Kingdom's celebrations of International Family Year will hold its second meeting Monday under the chairmanship of Minister of Social Development Mohammad Al-Sqour. The committee is scheduled to discuss public and private preparations for the year and arrangements for the occasion. The committee was formed following the Declaration of 1994 as an international year of the family in accordance with U.N. General Assembly Resolution No. 44/82 for 1989.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Art exhibition by Syrian artist Sakir Farzat at the Balka Art Gallery, Fuhes City.
- ★ Art exhibition by Jamal Khmeish and Jihad Abu Suleiman at the Housing Bank Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Fadwa Al-Nabulsi at the Phoenix Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of a new collection of art works by Princess Wajdan Ali at The Gallery, Hotel Jordan InterContinental.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings and ceramics by Ali Al-Mi'mar, Hazem Al-Zub'bi, Abdul Raouf Sham'oun and Jalal Ureiqat at Eshbeella Art Gallery, 6th Circle, Amra Shopping Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Rana Dia and Mohammad Kadoumi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Lecture, in Arabic, entitled "No Capitalism, No Socialism" by Dr. Jalal Amin at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6.30 p.m.

JERASH FESTIVAL

- ★ Arabic play entitled "Abhan Arab Summit" at 8.30 p.m. at the South Theatre of Jerash (starring top Jordanian comedians Nabil Sawalha and Hisham Yonis).
- ★ Concert by Bashir and Ayman Zaqran at 8 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.



MOSAIC UNCOVERED IN JERASH: The recently discovered Byzantine mosaic floor in the heart of the city of Jerash measures 4.5 by 5.75 metres. Department Director Safwan Tell, who inspected the find Thursday, said the unearthed floor, is part of a larger floor lying 2.5 metres under a street. The mosaic floor depicts human animal and plant designs, he noted. The floor was found by the department excavators on land owned by a local resident. The land lies amidst a residential area.



EDUCATION MINISTRY AND UNRWA COOPERATE: Minister of Education and Higher Education Khaled Al Omari and other ministry officials meet with United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) representatives. The minister commended the relations between the ministry and UNRWA. Dr. Omari said the ministry is particularly concerned with schools in the Kingdom, considering them the basic unit of the educational

JPA, editors to form panel

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Press Association (JPA) Council and chief editors of newspapers owned by political parties Thursday agreed to form a joint committee to discuss recent resolutions taken by the JPA on ways to deal with political publications. After handing a memorandum to the JPA council on their legal and political views, the

chief editors stressed their support of the association and the need to develop it. The JPA council on its part stressed that political newspapers are like any other newspapers and should be treated likewise. The council said any differences existing between the JPA and the political newspapers are of a legal nature and the current JPA laws are now old and should be updated.

Jordan Times

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Jordanian Perspective

By Dr. Musa Keilani

Hamas-Fateh rapprochement — fruitful or futile?

THE current dialogue between Hamas and Fateh, that started in Amman on July 15, 1993, exemplifies the question "Who outwits whom?" Both sides are keen on manipulating the other by the best maximalist formulae. Hamas, led by a current resident in Tehran, Imad Al Alami, is determined to discredit the PLO through these talks. Meanwhile, Fateh, led by a former resident of Iran, Hani Al Hassan, is equally enthusiastic to use manipulative gestures to extract concessions from Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Both sides thought it was an opportune time to deviously use each other to minimise losses to maximise gains.

The background of this story does not date back to the first Hamas-Fateh dialogue which should have started in Khartoum on Nov. 16, 1992. It is actually much more recent, since the time when many Fateh Central Committee members found themselves marginalised by the recent developments within the Fateh decision-making hierarchy. The list of those who felt themselves neglected included many well-known names who used to be instrumental in all Fateh affairs prior to the third round of Arab-Israeli peace talks. The list included names of those of Hani Al Hassan, former PLO ambassador to Khomenei's Tehran, Subhi Abu Karsh, Abu Al Munther, Abbas Zaki (Abu Mishal), Mohammad Jihad, Mohammad Ghoneim (Abu Maher), Selim Al Za'anoun (Abu Al Adeb), Sakher Habash and Abdullah Al Ifrajji. This block of Central Committee members, though a very volatile block, expressed their resentment, during the June 10 meeting in Tunis, of the organisational set-up that is applied now with the PLO's higher echelons of power. They distrusted the larger-than-life roles being given to Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), Nabeel Sha'ath, Hakam Bala'awi and Ahmed Qureie (Abu Al Ala'a). They were very critical of the conciliatory neutral role taken by the supposedly number two man within the PLO, Farouq Qaddoumi (Abu Al Lutf), who is expected to handle all foreign issues including the ones pertaining to the peace process.

Though Mr. Arafat threatened to resign during the verbal confrontation within the Central Committee's heated debates, the old guards managed to extract two compromises. The first was an admission of alleged financial improprieties; consequently, Mr. Abu Karsh was entrusted with chairing an investigation committee. As for the second concession, it was a Palestinian national dialogue committee which was granted a mandate to discuss with Hamas as well as the other ten Damascus-based Palestinian factions the possibility of finding ways and means to coordinate stands.

But the crux of the issue regarding the PLO and the majority of the factions, including Hamas, is the Madrid peace formulae. Both sides are poles apart in their perspectives on and expectations of the peace components. So what is that requires a new start?

When the Hamas 3-man delegation arrived at Abbas Zaki's Fateh offices in Amman on July 15, 1993, Mohammad Nazzal and Sami Abdul Fattah were adamant in their demand for a PLO immediate withdrawal from the peace talks, while Adnan Samara, Nasser Yousef, Abbas Zaki and Hani Al Hassan were not enthusiastic advocates for the peace talks. It was evident throughout the talks that the old PLO guard, led by Al Hassan, is exerting a determined effort to defeat the PLO young Turks led by Mr. Sha'ath and Mr. Abbas. Their analysis is that weakening Mr. Arafat might be conducive to weakening his strong support of the Sha'ath-Abbas axis and consequently would lead to a Hassan-Zaki emergence as the stronger echelons who stopped "deviations

and aberrations."

The Hamas assumption considers weakening Mr. Arafat as a pre-trial run to defeat the whole PLO within the rank and file of the Palestinian people both within the West Bank and Gaza and among refugees in camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the diaspora.

The first call for a Palestinian national dialogue did not come from Hani Al Hassan and his Central Committee. It was actually articulated for the first time by Hamas in December 1992, as part of a five-item agenda submitted to the Sudanese mediator, Dr. Hassan Abdullah Al Turabi, who tried the first reconciliation efforts in Khartoum. This mediation effort followed the incident of Nov. 16, 1992 when Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghosheh (Abu Omar) refused to shake hands with Mr. Arafat who had arrived in Khartoum. Then, Mr. Ghosheh's excuse for his action was that the Hamas martyrs' blood in Gaza, spilled by Fateh assassins, was not dry yet.

The deportation of 419 Palestinians to Marj Al Zohour in Lebanon, forced Hamas and Fateh to resume the reconciliation talks which had been patronised by the Sudanese leader Turabi. One round of talks took place in November 1992; the second one was supposed to take place on Jan. 4, 1993. Mr. Turabi, then, forced the Hamas delegation to stay put for one whole week waiting for Mr. Arafat's delegation. Hamas then set the stage for this meeting by announcing its willingness to join the PLO umbrella without having a precondition any withdrawal from the peace talks with Israel. Furthermore, Hamas announced its acceptance of a gradual solution to the Palestinian problem through a Palestinian state to be established on just any part of the territory. Those statements by Mr. Nazzal, on Jan. 2, 1993, were interpreted as forming common ground with Fateh with the aim of facilitating the Khartoum dialogue. The statements were a turning point in the Hamas-Fateh relationship since the bloody July 8, 1992, when over 53 Palestinians were seriously wounded in severe armed clashes between thousands of followers of the two main groups in Gaza.

It is noteworthy in this respect to remark that the Khartoum meetings in early January 1993 were chaired by Mr. Turabi, Salim Za'anoun from Fateh and Musa Abu Marzuq from Hamas. Both Mr. Abu Marzuq and Mr. Za'anoun used to be active Muslim Brotherhood members, while Mr. Turabi is still one of the leaders of the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood.

When Mr. Arafat himself arrived in Khartoum and joined the meeting, he was asked to announce his acceptance of an all-Palestinian national dialogue in order to see the real number of those who are against the peace process. Mr. Arafat was asked to agree to what was called an "Armed Struggle Coordination Committee" within the occupied territories. A third demand by Hamas was a PLO withdrawal from the peace talks. Nothing materialised in spite of the typical Arab exchange of "brotherly kisses and verbal commitments to honour words."

In conclusion, the frequent recurrence of rapprochements and dialogues between Hamas and Fateh for the last two years give one indication that they all lead to a dead end. The futility of previous contacts is partially ascribed to the diametrically opposed ideological backgrounds of a secular Fateh and an Islamic Hamas. A Fateh with a peace agenda in mind can not tolerate a militant Hamas with jihad for the concept of liberation.

The Amman meetings of the two main Palestinian organisations, though adjourned for a week, will once again prove to be futile.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Confederation — a choice hinging on Israeli withdrawal

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

THE Arabic daily newspapers in the past week tackled the Middle East, the projected Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, the continued embargo on Iraq and domestic affairs.

A confederation between Jordan and Palestine concerns the Jordanians and the Palestinians alone and this can only emerge after the end of Israeli occupation, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily.

The paper said that the Israeli leaders are continually dwelling on the confederation issue in a bid to distract attention from the real issue of occupation and to divert world public opinion from the situation in the occupied lands.

The real issue, the paper said, is the continued occupation by Israel of Arab lands, in defiance of U.N. resolutions, and not the future relationship between the Jordanian and Palestinian people which is strictly the concern of the Palestinians and Jordanians alone.

Mohammad Kawash commented on the confederation issue by noting that Israel is keen on seeing this confederation take place now in order to prevent the creation of an independent Palestinian entity.

Israel does not want to recognise the Palestinian identity and therefore it is advisable for the Arab side to postpone talk about the confederation until after a peaceful settlement has been reached, said the writer in Al Dustour.

Despite the fact that the U.S.-Israeli alliance is known to be totally opposed to any unity between any two Arab states, this alliance is keen on a confederation between Jordan and Palestine, said Sawt Al Shaab daily.

The paper said that Israel and the United States refuse to discuss the question of Jerusalem, which Israel considers as its eternal capital, and both want to see the West Bank joining with Jordan without the Holy City so as to escape the prospect of discussing the Jerusalem question during the ongoing peace process.

These views were echoed by Tareq Masarweh, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, who said that any talk about a confederation is a form of pressure exerted on Jordan and the Palestinians who strive to ensure the complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied lands.

A confederation is premature and should hinge on and follow the completion of Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab lands, demanded the writer.

Tackling the same topic, Saleh Al Qallab, a columnist in Al Dustour said that the joint Jordanian-Palestinian higher committee is currently discussing coordination between the Palestinians and the Jordanians at the peace process and not paving the ground for a confederation.

The Jordanians and the Palestinians have maintained very close links, based on geography, religion, common destiny and goals throughout the ages, with or without a confederation, said the writer. He said that the Jordanians and the Palestinians form one nation and a strong unity that no foreign aggression can disrupt.

Instead of implementing U.N. resolutions, Israel is trying to find means to prevail and come up with different suggestions, like withdrawing from Gaza first, said Mahmoud Rimawi.

The columnist, who writes for Al Ra'i daily, said that it is Israel's refusal to implement U.N. resolutions that rendered the 10th round of the peace process futile.

The Israelis are continually offering new ideas to escape the crucial issue of withdrawing their troops from the occupied lands and to escape any discussion about the future of Jerusalem which they claim should be the undivided capital of Israel.

Saleh Al Qallab said that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who plans a tour of the Middle East soon, is expected to suggest that the peace process be resumed at the level of foreign ministers.

The writer, who writes for Al Dustour, said Mr. Christopher is also planning to sug-

gest that a confederation between Palestine and Jordan be implemented so as to facilitate the peace process and make it achieve success. But he said that this will be circumventing the question of Jerusalem, which the Arabs insist should be discussed while Israel adamantly refuses to include it on the agenda.

Mr. Christopher is coming here because his envoy, Dennis Ross, has failed to achieve any headway in the peace process, said Sawt Al Shaab daily.

Numerous visits to the region by envoys, foreign ministers and even heads of state have failed to bring about largely due to Israel's intransigence, said the paper.

It said that if the U.S. administration seeks to achieve success, it ought to send Mr. Christopher with new proposals that would force Israel to comply with the international legitimacy, otherwise, Mr. Christopher's mission would be doomed like that of Mr. Ross.

Fahd Al Fanek, a columnist in Al Ra'i, commented on the ongoing U.S. threats against Iraq, noting that the sanctions could kill a few Iraqis but can by no means bring about a change of the country's leadership.

The writer said that with their rocket attack on Baghdad last month, the Americans are providing evidence that they are after the Iraqi people, killing them and destroying their homes, but not hurting Iraqi leadership at all.

"The Israeli leaders are continually dwelling on the confederation issue in a bid to distract attention from the real issue of occupation and to divert world public opinion from the situation in the occupied lands. The real issue is the continued occupation by Israel of Arab lands, in defiance of U.N. resolutions."

With the aggression, the feeling of hatred towards the Americans is deepened and continues to deepen with the continued sanctions on the Iraqi people.

Al Ra'i columnist Tareq Masarweh said that the Iraqis are bound to face more acts of aggression from the Americans. Washington's racist racism is at its highest level now and nothing stands in the way of further acts of aggression against the people of Iraq under any pretext of protecting the Kurds, inspecting Iraqi scientific installations or any others.

A columnist in Al Ra'i said that the present government holds no power to bring about any change to the present Election Law now that a Royal decree has been issued for holding the elections.

The present government can only determine the date for holding the election without issuing a temporary law.

Michael Jumiean, a guest columnist in Al Dustour, urged heads of political parties to make their stand clear and declare their platform to the public so that the voters will be able to know exactly who they should give their votes to in the coming elections. Furthermore, the writer said, the public has the right to know the names of candidates from each party to avoid confusion, especially as most parties hold similar views.

Noting that the turnout at registration for elections is still very low, Ahmad Dabbas, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily, said that the political parties concerned with the coming elections ought to join hands with the government in urging the electorate to register.

The writer said that the government should also offer facilities to the public and remove obstacles in the way of registration by cutting down on routine.

Dangerous sea change!

A MOMENTOUS change, a change of seismic proportions in U.S. policy on the Palestine problem apparently became official on Wednesday, June 21, according to an answer given by Secretary of State Warren Christopher at a press conference in Washington before leaving on an extended foreign tour which will bring him to West Asia on Aug. 1.

The quite specific question was put by a senior correspondent of the Associated Press: "Is it U.S. government policy that the West Bank and Gaza, and East Jerusalem, is occupied territory?" Blinking nervously, as is his wont, the secretary refused to say, "Yes" without saying "No", in one of his usual, long rambling answers. The words he used were: "The status of the West Bank and Jerusalem were under active negotiation" and he did not want to get involved in the details.

Ever since the end of June or early July Washington has been letting slip that the West Bank and Gaza were no longer considered "occupied territories" but "disputed territories", sovereignty over which had yet to be negotiated. Now that hugely important, but so far, covert shift in policy has been almost officially confirmed and by no less a person than the secretary of state.

This could be the end of the foundation of the so-called "peace process" which since 1967 has been resolutions 242 and 338. Those two resolutions have been referred to so often as having become a sort of semi-mystical mantra, a ritualistic chant. And because the territories were "occupied" the corollary was that, sometime, they would be vacated and returned to the former owner, Jordan, or to its successor, the PLO. Hence the talks about the principles of "land for peace" and "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force."

Any negotiation about sovereignty in and ownership of Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, in which the U.S. has a part, will inevitably end up with sovereignty being awarded to Israel with the U.S. foursquare behind it, which will assert its ownership also because, in the meantime, Israel would have forcibly appropriated most of the territory anyway.

That result of the U.S. abandonment of 242 is bad enough, but it is limited in extent. Yet there is a much larger ill-effect unfelt in scope. By stepping back from a Security Council resolution which the U.S. itself helped to draft, which the U.S. voted for in the council, and which successive U.S. administrations have made the bedrock of their West Asia policy — only last year President George Bush repeated the fact that East Jerusalem was "occupied territory" — the Clinton administration has undermined, perhaps fatally, the entire U.N. system.

That system is about contentious issues being brought to the world body which debates them, produces resolutions, which, when passed, are at least supposed to be observed and implemented by member states; especially if they are mandatory council resolutions like 242. After what Christopher said on Wednesday, however, U.N. resolutions will become like items of food on a buffet table — some can be chosen and others neglected, according to choice and taste. For 26 years 242 "lasted" all right to the U.S., but since the Clinton administration took over it no longer does so and can be put aside.

The world has become used to changes of policy and of personnel in the U.S. when the Democrats take over from the Republicans or vice-versa. But there has to be continuity of certain basic principles, like the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. Otherwise the international community would collapse into chaos and would not be a "community" because no one single country would know, for more than a few years at a time, where any other country stood on any particular issue.

It could be argued that the abandonment of 242 has come about because the Clinton administration's West Asia policy is now firmly controlled by American Jewish pro-Israeli Zionists who fill almost all important policy positions in the State Department, the White House and the National Security Council.

But faced with this abandonment of the basic principles of the peace process and of the Madrid formula, the only effective response that the Arabs, and especially the Palestinians, could give would be a final withdrawal from that process, and a refusal to return to Washington for the 11th round of the talks.

Every country that in any way depends on Security Council resolutions should take note of the grave dangers produced by the U.S. abandonment of 242.

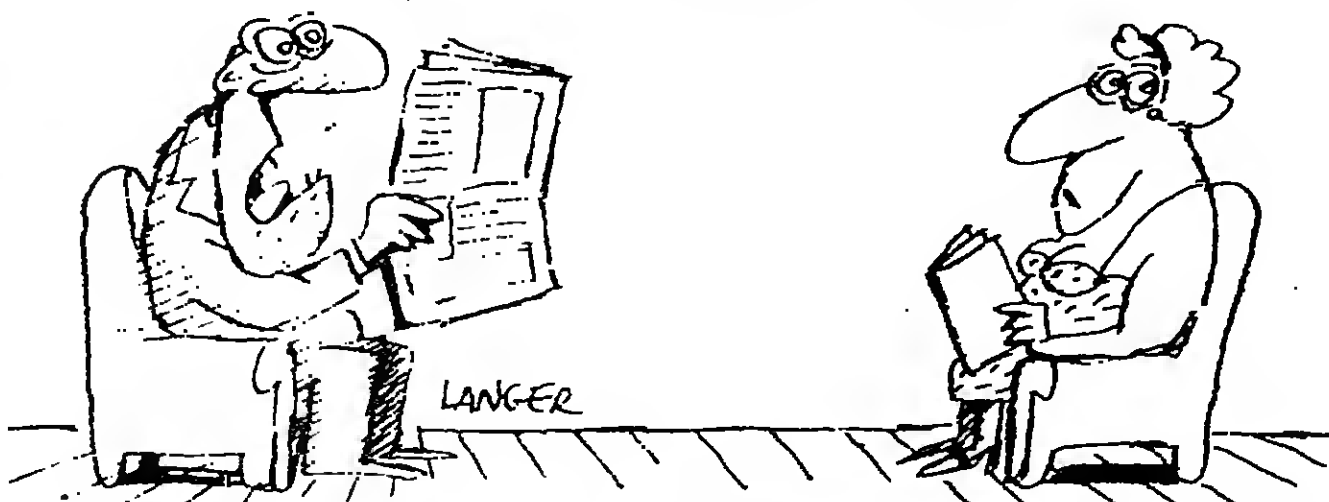
By G.H. Jansen

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily demanded a clear, United Arab stand vis-a-vis the open threats addressed at Lebanon and Syria by Israel. A clear stand is required at the moment to counter the arrogant and threatening stand of the Jewish state and its leaders who continue to issue statements implying an imminent incursion into Lebanon, said the paper. Arab countries involved in the peace process have a prime responsibility in this case and should take a collective stand and expose the Israeli position to the whole world, demanded the paper. Arab countries which are keen on pursuing the peace process and attain a just peace ought to make constructive moves at the regional and international levels to counter Israeli threats and preempt any aggression that is mainly aimed at thwarting the world community's efforts to achieve a just peace in the region, continued the daily. In their excuse for issuing the threats against Lebanon and Syria, the Israeli leaders cite the continued Lebanese resistance attacks on the Israeli troops and their allies in southern Lebanon, recalled the daily. It said that the Lebanese have the right to resist occupation of their country and combat aggression directed against them by Israel and its allies. The paper said that the world is watching the Israelis massing their troops and their tanks along the border with Lebanon in preparation for a fresh aggression. It demanded prompt intervention on the part of the world community to put an end to Israel's occupation and Israel's defiance of international rules.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily compared the United States and its arrogance with Hitler's Germany, which had similarly attempted to dominate world affairs. Abdul Rahim Omar said Hitler's actions and his expansionist designs in Europe led to a world war causing so much destruction and loss of life. The second and final phase of the 20th century is witnessing a repeat of historical events represented in Washington's attempts to dominate the world and in Israel's continued occupation of Arab lands and eviction of Arab inhabitants, in defiance of all principles and international legitimacy, said the writer.

THE DEMAND FOR SOVIET SCIENTISTS IN THE USA IS GETTING A LITTLE OUT OF HAND... "BABY-SITTER. PREFERABLY NUCLEAR ENGINEER. PH. D. LENINGRAD UNIVERSITY. MIN. EXPERIENCE 20 YEARS SEND RESUME..."



By LANGER in Huma (Buenos Aires) C&W Syndicate

Deadly waste

By Murray Feshbach

There may have been far more Chernobyls in the former Soviet Union than ever known, and the threat to local and even foreign populations may still be significant.

Last April 6 an accident occurred at the east Siberian city of Tomsk-7, resulting in the release of radioactive contamination into the atmosphere.

Tomsk-7 is one of 10 formerly closed, or "secret," nuclear cities of the former Soviet Union — or perhaps (if you include chemical and biological warfare activities) one of the 16 secret cities; or perhaps as many as 87 — all numbers propounded by sources in the former empire.

There and elsewhere, the problem of radioactive contamination is long-lasting, and the danger may be much higher than ever admitted.

The word "secret" is used in the sense that the cities were closed, were not shown on any Soviet map, were not counted in the population or the labour force, and their activities not

discussed seriously by the Soviet authorities until last year.

Then, at a May 1992 meeting in Stavanger, Norway, Viktor Mikheylov, the minister of Atomic Industry of Russia, indicated that these secret cities were part of the military-nuclear industry.

Concern over a nuclear brain drain and the control of nuclear materials is in part the underlying rationale for much of the foreign aid going to the former Soviet Union.

But much of the old network is not controlled, as witnessed by the growing number of attempts to smuggle out nuclear materials. Moreover, we are just beginning to learn about the stockpiles of nuclear and chemical materials at these secret cities and facilities.

Among the most hazardous materials we know about is dimethylhydrazine, also called heptyl, a liquid rocket fuel used for Russian missiles. It is classified as supertoxic, carcinogenic, nerve paralyzing and volatile.

What is not known is how all this material is safeguarded. There may be 150,000 tonnes of heptyl in these closed cities, in missiles

stationed elsewhere, in production etc., but no technology exists for dealing with it.

In this matter in particular, technical assistance should be given only with great caution, with special attention paid to the recipients. Too many examples in the former Soviet Union exist of individuals such as the former director of the South Ukrainian Nuclear Power Plant, who turned off the safety valves three times in the past year despite all the stringent, post-Chernobyl regulations.

He was fired — finally — but only after the third such incident.

We are learning more about the dumping of radioactive waste and seeing more evidence of its presence: nuclear suits with live reactors and control rods; three ships in Marmara harbour with radioactive waste; radioactivity coursing through the Ob and Yenisey rivers of Siberia towards the Arctic Ocean.

In addition, there are about 160 nuclear submarines awaiting dismantling — and with a bad track record of accidents, including the release of radioactivity in the Sea of Japan area and in the

north near Severodvinsk, the nuclear submarine-producing port. Severodvinsk has recently been reclassified as a closed city.

One should note, in addition, the 115 so-called "civilian" nuclear explosions since the mid-1960s.

The tasks involved in cleaning up, of disarmament and dismantling, of defusing and detoxifying, are enormous. We need bilateral and multilateral approaches in order to be successful. Failure to do so leaves at risk much of the earth: Europe, Japan, the U.S., Canada, the Middle East.

The U.S. does not have enough money for all of these requirements, but it does have the technical capabilities, management and environmental leadership to help the new members of the international community with their staggering problems.

All the aid packages in the world will not help Russia and the rest of the former USSR resolve their economic and political dilemmas if they are undergoing environmental and health disasters at the same time — The Jerusalem Post.



Jordan's foreign exchange payments rise by JD 495m

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) issued foreign exchange permits estimated to be worth JD 2,771.8 million for goods and services during the year 1992, up from JD 2,276.4 million in 1991, figures released by the CBJ showed.

The figures include payment for merchandise and services as well as the cost of servicing foreign debts and repatriation of return on foreign investments and transfer of foreign workers in the Kingdom.

The latest statistical bulletin of the CBJ said foreign exchange permits worth JD 1,907.1 million were issued during the year for goods and JD 864.7 million for services. This compares with JD 1,505.1 million for goods and JD 771.3 million for services during 1991.

The bulletin said the U.S. accounted for JD 518.6 million of the permits — with JD 165.4 million in goods and JD 353.2 million in services. These figures compare with JD 356.6 million —

JD 126.2 million in goods and JD 230.4 million in services — for the year 1991.

The European Community (EC) countries collectively accounted for JD 910 million — JD 699.4 million in goods and JD 210.6 million in services — during the year compared with JD 683.8 million — JD 490.2 million in goods and JD 193.6 million — during the previous year.

Arab countries were the beneficiaries of exchange permits worth JD 549.1 million — JD 309.5 million in goods and JD 239.6 million in services — issued during 1992.

These figures compare with JD 597.5 million — JD 331.1 million in goods and JD 266.4 million in services — in 1991.

Non-EC countries accounted for JD 187.9 million — JD 173.9 million in goods and JD 14 million in services — during 1992, compared with JD 144.6 million — JD 119.6 million in goods and JD 25 million in services — in the previous year.

Other countries were the beneficiaries of exchange permits worth JD 606.2 million — JD

557.9 million in goods and JD 48.3 million in services — issued during 1992, compared with JD 493.9 million — JD 55.9 million in goods and JD 55.9 million in services — in 1991.

The CBJ bulletin said foreign exchange permits worth JD 787.6 million — JD 538.5 million for goods and 249.1 million in services — during the first three months of this year.

A further split-up showed that the U.S. accounted for JD 206.5 million — JD 150.9 million in services and JD 55.6 million in goods — followed by the EC with JD 194.9 million — JD 138.8 million in goods and JD 56.1 million in services in the first quarter.

Arab countries accounted for JD 195.5 million — JD 166 million in goods and JD 29.5 million in services — during the same period.

Non-EC countries were the beneficiaries for JD 29.2 million — JD 25.9 million in goods and JD 3.3 million in services while other countries collectively accounted for JD 162.2 million in goods and JD 9.3 million in services.

Paris, Bonn wheel out big guns to defend franc

PARIS (R) — France and Germany promised Friday to defend the French franc from an increasingly fierce speculative attack that threatens to blow apart the European Community's semi-fixed currency grid.

In a statement released by the French finance ministry, the government and central banks of Germany and France said the franc's rate against the German mark corresponded correctly to economic fundamentals.

"Together with their European partners, they will continue to cooperate according to the rules of the European Monetary System (EMS) exchange rate mechanism (ERM)," the statement said.

The French central bank drove home the message by jacking up its overnight lending rate to 10 per cent from 7.75 per cent.

The increase makes it more expensive for traders to borrow francs in order to sell them in the hope of repurchasing them more cheaply after a devaluation.

But French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur told Reuters Thursday in Rabat during a visit to Morocco: "There will be no (franc) devaluation."

U.N.: Developing world foreign investment to double by 2000

LONDON (R) — Flows of direct foreign investment to the developing world could double to around \$80 billion by the year 2000, according to a United Nations report.

The scenario is based on expected rapid growth in Asia and Latin America.

Overall growth in global flows of foreign direct investment, slowed by recessionary trends in industrial countries in the last two years, is expected to increase again in coming years.

The world investment report published by the United Nations Conference on Trade and De-

velopment (UNCTAD) says flows to developing countries reached \$40 billion in 1992, up from \$25 billion five years earlier.

Investment is concentrated in Asia and Latin America with Africa receiving only \$2 billion last year. It says investment is growing rapidly in part as an alternative to investments in regions of slow growth in the triad, the United States, Japan and the European Community.

The report says that by last year, the global stock of foreign direct investment had reached around \$2 trillion, generating

\$5.5 trillion of sales compared to world exports of \$4 trillion.

One per cent of the world's 37,000 transnational companies own half of the total stock of foreign investment, the report says.

"Transnational corporations are a powerful force for binding national economies together," it notes.

The report says transnational corporations have an important role in the growth of investment because they embody a package of growth-enhancing attributes — capital, technology, managerial

and organisational know-how and access to international markets.

But it notes that foreign direct investment has concentrated on triad countries and clusters of developing countries around each triad member.

The report says developing countries must try to upgrade their economies by attracting transnational corporations with specialised activities such as data processing, software writing or configuring their policy regimes to conform with a large neighbour, as in the case of Mexico and the United States.

U.S.-Europe ties at watershed, group says

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S.-European ties are at a watershed and new types of economic cooperation are vital now the cold war is over, an influential policy group said Friday.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace said the "new common path" for the United States and European Community (EC) could have big economic benefits, affecting everything from trade to foreign investment to the value of the dollar.

"The time has come to reinvent the Atlantic partnership — to put it on a new footing for the next century," the Carnegie Endowment said in a detailed new study.

It said the two sides, once bound by the Soviet threat, should now start cooperating on the "looming issues of industrial and competitiveness policy, foreign investment, macro-economic and monetary relations, and the environment."

Written by "younger Europeans and Americans," the study focused on far tighter economic cooperation now the cold war has given way to new security threats, be it ethnic strife, arms prolifera-

tion or environmental changes. "Enhanced U.S. ties with the Community can strengthen the capabilities of both partners," Carnegie Chairman Robert Zoellick said in the report. "Indeed firm political and economic ties are the foundation for sustaining an important alliance that is adjusting to vastly changed circumstances."

Mr. Zoellick said the U.S. side should support closer European integration and not feel threatened by a strong partner across the Atlantic.

Nor should Japan see a transatlantic alliance as any sign of the United States and Europe ganging up on Tokyo, he said.

The institute said new ground rules would allow the two sides to compete as well as cooperate, stressing closer ties on specific sectors of the economy to augment more traditional coordination on broad macro-economics. It also recommended a new

treaty on bilateral investment including stronger antitrust policies, more predictable tax treatment and clearer guidelines on federalism.

As for European monetary union, the report said monetary integration — when it finally comes — would make the EC less susceptible to U.S. influence.

"The impact of a single European currency on the international role of the American dollar — and American fiscal policy options — could be significant," it said.

Washington would have to take greater account of EC policies, and investors would be less inclined to hold dollars, potentially constraining the U.S. fiscal strategy, it added.

"Finally, in the short term, the efforts of the European nations to align their inflation and interest rates to achieve monetary integration could be deflationary," the report said.

Saudis and Iranians trade accusations over weak oil prices

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (AFP) — Saudi Arabia, in a strong reaction to Iranian calls to return to its pre-Gulf war production level, blamed Tehran Friday for the decline in oil prices.

Saudi Oil Minister Hisham Nazer said Iran produced in June more than 277,000 barrels per day (b/d) above its quota of 3.34 million b/d set by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for the third quarter.

"All oil publications unanimously agree that Iran exceeded its quota by more than 277,000 b/d in June. By doing so, Iran is solely responsible for the fall in prices," Sheikh Nazer said after meeting OPEC President Jean Ping. He also restated Saudi Arabia's commitment to its own OPEC quota.

His remarks, carried by the official Saudi Press Agency, came two days after Iranian oil minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh called for production cuts by OPEC's Gulf members who raised output

during the Gulf war to make up for a halt in Iraqi and Kuwaiti exports.

He was apparently referring to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which boosted production by nearly three million b/d and 800,000 b/d respectively and are still producing the same level.

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest crude oil exporter which produces nearly one third of OPEC's output, also came under fire Thursday by the Tehran Times which reflects government thinking.

It said Saudi Arabia's production of eight million b/d was not justified as its pre-war quota was around five million b/d.

Sheikh Nazer fired back that the Iranian allegations of Saudi overproduction were "just a cover for Iran's continued violation of its OPEC-assigned quota."

The market monitoring committee referred to the Iranian contraventions at two recent meetings of oil producers, he

said.

The war of words between Saudi Arabia and Iran, OPEC's second largest producer, erupted as Mr. Ping prepared to fly to Tehran after talks with Sheikh Nazer. He is also due to travel Saturday to Abu Dhabi, the last leg of a Gulf tour he began early Thursday to prepare the ground for OPEC's urgent talks.

UAE oil sources confirmed reports that the talks, originally set for July 28, would be postponed for at least one week. They said they expected Mr. Ping to set a final date at the end of his Gulf mission.

The talks were called after prices plummeted Monday to their lowest level in nearly three years on growing speculation that the United Nations would allow Iraq to resume limited oil exports for humanitarian reasons.

Although they rallied later, the area still more than \$4 below OPEC's benchmark of \$21 and nearly 15 per cent lower than their level in early June.

Philip Morris extends Marlboro price cuts to other premium brands

NEW YORK (AP) — Philip Morris has said the lower prices set to end next month on its best-selling Marlboro cigarettes would be extended to other premium brands like Parliament and Virginia Slims.

The move by the nation's biggest tobacco maker was expected to put pressure on other leading tobacco makers to make comparable cuts, a response to the growing consumer preference for lower-priced goods.

Philip Morris had announced a temporary price promotion programme in April that effectively cut Marlboro prices by about 40 cents a pack in a bid to stem erosion in its share to discount cigarettes.

It said that the programme had

helped the brand end eight consecutive monthly declines in Marlboro's market share.

William Campbell, president and chief executive of Philip Morris USA, said Marlboro added about 1.1 percentage points in April and May to its leading share of the U.S. cigarette market and continued to gain share.

As a result, he said Philip Morris would convert the promotional programme set to expire Aug. 8 into an outright 40 cent per pack cut in the wholesale price of Marlboros.

That should cut the average price to consumers for a pack of Marlboros to about \$1.75 from about \$2.25 before the promotion began.

"It seems to me all the other companies will have to follow,"

said John Maxwell, tobacco analyst for Wheat First Securities in Richmond, Virginia.

Philip Morris said the price actions should have no effect on its parent company's previous projection that domestic tobacco profits will be off by as much as 40 per cent or \$2 billion for all of 1993.

The cigarette pricing announcement came as Philip Morris Companies Inc. announced that its earnings for the second quarter fell 22.2 per cent to \$1.05 billion, or \$1.20 a share, from \$1.35 billion or \$1.48 a share, a year ago.

The earnings per share were roughly in line with analyst's projections. Revenue rose 4.3 per cent to \$15.78 billion from \$15.16 billion a year earlier.

DIYARBAKIR (AFP) — Prime Minister Tansu Ciller met a distrustful, placard-bearing crowd when she visited a \$220 million economic aid plan here Friday in a poor area of Turkey.

Speaking to about 3,500 people in this virtual capital of Turkey's neglected, rebellion-racked southeast, Ms. Ciller made clear that her new government's policy was to "develop the region, but fight against the terrorists with all our power."

Members of the crowd carried placards asking that southeasterners "be treated like the others in the west (of Turkey)."

Ciller's plans for southeast aid run into hostile crowd

"We always hear the same promises of a better life, promises that are quickly forgotten when the speakers go back to Ankara," one Diyarbakir resident told AFP of Ms. Ciller's speech.

Ms. Ciller, who took the unprecedented step of holding a cabinet meeting in the mountain-side town of Hakkari Thursday, has made a two-day tour of the southeast to launch a \$220 million package that promises to create 23,000 jobs in the Kurdish-speaking provinces of Hakkari

and Sirnak, the poorest areas of Turkey.

But her programme was not entirely convincing in a region dominated by Kurds, who accuse Ankara of treating them as second-class citizens and who suffer the repercussions of a long-running war between the Turkish army and the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK).

"This meeting is designed to pull the wool over our eyes," said a man who listened to Ms. Ciller in Sirnak city's main square.

"The statements do not respond to our concerns about human rights."

Several mayors in Hakkari province handed Ms. Ciller letters, protesting against what they called the security forces' violations of human rights. One such letter criticised "the more than \$100 million worth of investment in weapons, military material and soldiers in the region since 1987."

The pro-Kurd, Turkish-language newspaper Ozgur Gundem said Ms. Ciller's plans "only

amounted to economic promises."

But Ms. Ciller told journalists Friday that she was pleased with the response.

"We saw great interest from the people of Hakkari and Sirnak, the people are relying on us," Ms. Ciller said.

Last weekend suspected Kurdish rebels killed 26 villagers, including 14 children, in the eastern Van province and left 20 others wounded in what local authorities believed was a re-

venge attack on families of local militia aiding the army campaign.

Last week, about 50 people died in similar attacks.

According to figures compiled by AFP, an estimated 7,000 rebels, police, troops and civilians have died since the PKK began the separatist rebellion in 1984.

In Ankara, an Iranian government delegation arrived for talks on security along the countries' common border. Turkey says the Kurdish rebels use Iran as a staging ground for attacks, and has accused Iran of providing the guerrillas with military and logistical support. Tehran denies the charges.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff

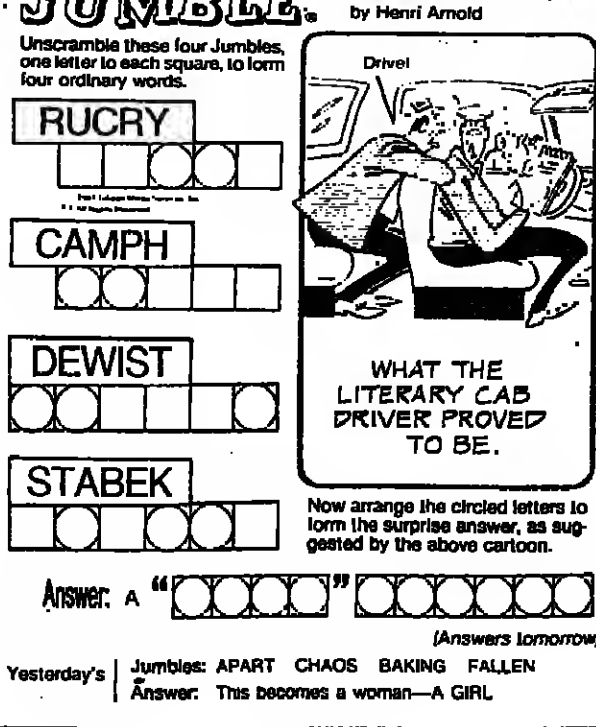


THE BETTER HALF



"I can accept criticism, except when it's directed at me!"

JUMBLE



THE Daily Crossword



Jordanian industrial goods have 63.3% import content

Following is the second and last part of an article on industrialisation in Jordan. This part details the key factors that constitute the value added content and states various recommendations to advance the industrial sector.

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian industry is so heavily reliant on imported raw materials that, according to economist and newspaper columnist Fahd Al Fanek, the value added percentage is only 36.7 per cent of the total cost of a product.

Describing the percentage as "generally very low," Dr. Fanek explained in a lecture at an economic symposium organised by the Centre for Strategic Studies and held recently at the University of Jordan, that industrial products at sale prices have an estimated JD 1,752 million value. Out of this amount, JD 973 million are costs of raw and intermediate materials used in the production process.

By adding JD 136 million of other expenses unrelated to the production process to the aforementioned costs, the net value added figure works out to be JD 643 million spread over wages (JD 169 million), indirect taxes (JD 123 million), fixed assets' depreciation (JD 106 million) and other amounts related to banks' interest, income tax, consolidating reserves and dividends to shareholders.

Wages represented 26.3 per cent of the value added amount or 9.6 per cent of the products' final value. As such, Dr. Fanek said, raising or reducing the wage factor was relatively of low effect on the final cost of an industrial product.

Dr. Fanek cautioned that since wages take 26.3 per cent of the value added amount, it should not be misunderstood that the remaining 73.7 per cent of the value added goes to the industrialists.

He said depreciation accounts for 16.5 per cent of the value added amount and indirect taxes, especially relating to fuel, cigarettes, drinks and other items, account for another 19.1 per cent.

By deducting these two elements the surplus from operations would be 38.1 per cent from which approximately 3.8 per cent bank interest, 1.7 per cent and five per cent income tax would be paid leaving 27.6 per cent for the industrialists.

As such, owners of industries get a share of value added almost equal to the workers who, according to Dr. Fanek, receive a JD 196 monthly salary of which JD 164 is a direct cash payment and the rest in other fringe benefits.

The study analyses the inputs required by industrialists and notes that 50 per cent of the purchases are directly imported from abroad, 10 per cent are (indirect) imports available in the local market, 25 per cent are inputs purchased from other Jordanian industrial firms and the rest, 15 per cent, local materials. Dr. Fanek recalled in his study

Share percentage of mining and convertible industry in gross domestic product at cost			
Year	Mining	Convertible industry	Total
1986	4.07	11.08	15.15
1987	4.09	11.04	15.12
1988	3.77	8.88	12.65
1989	4.66	12.30	16.96
1990	4.07	13.50	17.57
1991	3.19	12.89	16.08
1992	3.06	13.05	16.11

that the dinar devaluation in 1988/89 was not welcomed by Jordanian industrialists because expenditure on raw materials, machinery and spares by the industrial sector has exceeded the earnings from exports. However, he pointed out that the situation would gradually change as higher foreign exchange costs would prompt higher utilisation of local inputs and would induce industrialists to give priority to exports.

According to the study, there were 15,348 industrial units in Jordan at the end of 1991. The units employed 89,297 workers of whom 5.6 per cent were female and 19.3 per cent were unsalaried (indicating that many were family members or trainees).

Employment in the mining branch of the industrial sector represents only two per cent of the workforce although mining accounts for 40 per cent of national exports.

Convertible industries employed eight per cent of the workforce at the end of 1991 although this industrial field serves mostly the local market.

The study examined the share of both industrial branches in the gross domestic product (GDP) pointing out that mining

tries, Arab and foreign equity is 9.1 per cent with the rest, 54.5 per cent, being private sector equity.

4) Total taxes and indirect fees collected from the industrial sector amounted to JD 123 million of which 96.4 per cent were production and consumption taxes.

5) Phosphate and potash mining has limited scope and, as the Kingdom is near mining close to these limits, Jordan must focus on other resources, such as those in the Dead Sea and on expanding extraction of marble and granite among other construction materials.

Dr. Fanek recommended that Jordanian industries strive to raise the value added factor in their production by embarking on true industrial processes and not be satisfied by only canning or packaging imported products. He further suggested linking wages to productivity on sound and agreed basis and not merely rely on factors of seniority and annual raises.

Other recommendations proposed by Dr. Fanek were:

A) Increased reliance on local elements, they be raw materials, expertise or labour.

B) Controlling costs and minimising losses and waste of resources.

C) Providing extra attention to the export drive to transform the industrial sector from being a net importer to a net exporter status.

D) Utilising the utmost production capabilities on the largest scale to enable the reduction of intermediate costs.

E) Encouraging the establishment of agricultural industries even if that entails levying customs fees on imported agricultural products to protect local production.

According to the 1993-1997 development plan, which was quoted by Dr. Fanek in his study, industrial advancement can be better achieved through the following policies:

I — Adoption of one central unit at the Ministry of Industry and Trade to build and provide an information base about the investment climate and investment opportunities available.

II — Facilitating procedures to obtain import and export permits whereby the procedures serve only the collection of fees and imposing boycott regulations.

III — Limiting all registration and licensing procedure to one window.

IV — Encouraging the formation of public shareholding companies through shunning the tax burden on these companies and removal of legislations hindering the transformation of private companies to public shareholding companies.

The adoption of an automatic mechanism to issue, price and float shares by investment banks and putting the adequate legislation to prevent manipulation in share prices or hiding information were also mentioned for activating industrial progress.

V — Encouraging the financial sector to provide funds for investments through supporting the capabilities of the Industrial Development Bank, export finance guarantee corporation and through the creation of an institution to partially guarantee loans to small projects.

VI — Amending the law for encouraging investment to include additional incentives.

VII — Providing tax incentives through various deductions.

VIII — Organising auditing procedures.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
WEEKLY REPORT
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (17/07/1992 - 17/07/1993)

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK	1,815,420	184.000	185.000	176.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	844,712	7.000	8.500	6.800
SAUDI ARAB BANK	70,124	44.000	44.000	42.250
BANK OF JORDAN	293,151	1.110	1.350	1.250
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	215,855	1.000	1.000	1.000
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	480,078	0.500	0.500	0.450
THE JORDANIAN BANK	379,097	0.500	0.500	0.500
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	785,951	1.500	1.500	1.500
ARAB JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	167,742	4.500	4.500	4.500
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	216,742	4.500	4.500	4.500
ARAB BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	38,848	5.000	5.100	4.750
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	80,729	5.000	5.100	5.100
REIT CLAL SAVING INVESTMENT FOR JORDAN	11,411	3.000	3.100	3.200
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	2,526,819	7.100	7.200	7.100
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	27,902	4.700	4.700	4.600
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	447,019	1.000	1.000	1.000
JORDAN INSURANCE	28,774	4.250	4.250	4.250
MIDDLE EAST INSURANCE	73,004	3.250	3.250	3.250
ARABIAN REAS INSURANCE	65,066	2.150	2.150	2.150
GENERAL ARABIA INSURANCE	5,025	3.500	3.500	3.500
JORDANIAN INSURANCE	100,839	4.100	4.200	4.250
JORDAN PREMIER INSURANCE	14,544	3.800	3.750	3.600
UNIVERSAL INSURANCE	5,086	1.000	1.000	1.000
YAMOUK INSURANCE & REINSURANCE	19,175	3.700	3.700	3.700
MIDDLE EAST INSURANCE	4,877	2.700	2.700	2.700
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	1,778	1.200	1.200	1.200
JORDAN GULF INSURANCE	10,135	1.450	1.450	1.450
ARAB ORION INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE	550	1.150	1.250	1.250
ARAB LAND INSURANCE	4,448	1.000	1.000	1.000
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	484,571	2.450	2.450	2.450
JORDAN HOTEL & TOURISM	7,434	8.350	8.350	7.750
JORDAN TOURISM & TRAVEL	20,629	1.280	1.280	1.280
JORDAN DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	245,924	4.510	4.510	4.510
VEHICLES OWNERS FEDERATION	1,000	1.000	1.000	1.000
JORDANIAN INVESTMENT	100,178	5.750	5.750	5.750
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE	7,430	0.610	0.610	0.610
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	245,924	4.510	4.510	4.510
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	297,874	0.880	0.880	0.880
JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	30,544	0.810	0.810	0.810
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALBA	17,022	17.000	17.000	17.550
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALBA	71,019	10.000	10.000	10.000
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONGOSE HOTELS	247,729	2.360	2.360	2.360
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	100,740	7.100	7.100	7.100
ARAB PRESS & PUBLISHING / AD-INSURANCE	215,950	25.000	25.000	25.000
ATTACHED COM. NATURAL MANUFACTURING	85,234	0.250	0.250	0.250
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	1,895,478	2.050	2.050	2.050
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	26,086	4.150	4.150	4.150
JORDAN INSURANCE	183,148	3.300	3.300	3.300
JORDAN TARIFF	10,470	0.850	0.850	0.850
WOMEN PROTESTERS	28,420	1.150	1.150	1.150
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	508,407	8.550	8.550	8.550
THE JORDAN MOVED HELLS	51,009	11.750	11.750	11.750
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	2,651,033	10.110	10.000	9.700
ARAB CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	254,187	7.150	7.150	7.150
ARAB CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	49,797	4.400	4.400	4.400
JORDAN PRINTING & PACKING	40,005	5.000	5.000	5.000
THE JORDAN PAPER MANUFACTURING	232,384	0.810	0.810	0.810
JORDAN PAPER MANUFACTURING	144,882	4.220	4.220	4.220
THE PUBLIC TRADING	10,720	2.750	2.750	2.750
ARAB CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	143,800	20.500	21.000	21.000
SPINNING & WEAVING	50,975	1.140	1.140	1.140
BAJTA INDUSTRIES	79,227	3.300	3.300	3.300
JORDAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	18,127	0.400	0.400	0.400
ARAB GLASS INDUSTRIES	704,651	21.300	21.300	21.000
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	162,507	2.150	2.150	2.150
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	18,114	10.700	10.700	10.400
GENERAL INVESTMENT	11,195	4.150	4.150	4.150
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	86,403	3.150	3.150	3.150
JORDAN MEDICAL EQUIPMENT	13,445	0.450	0.450	0.450
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	170,242	8.800	8.750	8.700
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	35,171	2.800	2.800	2.800
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	174,677	4.370	4.350	4.310
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	87,318	4.450	4.450	4.450
JORDAN ROBOCHEM INDUSTRIES	67,895	3.900	3.900	3.900
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	72,795	8.550	8.550	8.550
ALABOR INDUSTRIES	500	5.000	5.000	5.000
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MACHINERY	45,047	1.200	1.200	1.200
JORDAN PRECAST CONCRETE INDUSTRY	59,141	0.520	0.520	0.520
JORDAN WOOD INDUSTRIES / JALCO	2,685	7.700	7.700	7.700
NATIONAL CEMENT & VITRO MANUFACTURING	775,118	10.500	10.400	10.700
JORDAN STEEL INDUSTRIES	49,714	4.400	4.400	4.400
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	279,840	4.200	4.200	4.200
JORDAN FUMIGAT CO. FOR AGRI. & FOOD PROD.	130,991	1.870	1.860	1.900
JAMHARI INVESTMENT	122,243	3.100	3.100	3.100
UNIVERSAL WOODEN INDUSTRIES	787,280	5.850	5.900	5.950
GRAND TOTAL	22,651,911			

PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (17/07/1992 - 17/07/1993)

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
CENTRAL GENERAL TRADING & STORAGE	64,391	1.240	1.270	1.240
JORDAN TRADING FACTORIES	1,440	1.840	1.850	1.850
JORDANIAN CAPITALIST INVESTMENT HOLDING	1,573	1.420	1.350	1.160
MIDDLE EAST FOR DEVTL. & TRADE CO.	5,821	1.710	1.400	2.180
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	53,724	1.890	1.980	2.190
NATIONAL CREDITING INDUSTRIES CO-LTD	279,141	2.130	2.240	2.320
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	544,418	3.700	3.700	3.700
NATIONAL MULTIPLE INDUSTRIES				
GRAND TOTAL	1,092,299			

Financial Markets

in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin
Date: 27.7.1993

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6950	0.6970
Sterling Pound	1.0347	1.0539
Deutsche Mark	0.4078	0.4096
Swiss Franc	0.4617	0.4640
French Franc	0.1193	0.1199
Japanese Yen	0.6419	0.6451
Dutch Guilder	0.3523	0.3541
Swedish Krona	0.0868	0.0872
Italian Lira	0.0334	0.0336
Belgian Franc	0.01973	0.01983

Other Currencies
Date: 27.7.1993

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8180	1.8380
Lebanese Lira	0.03915	0.04100
Saudi Riyal	0.1848	0.1855
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2200	2.2900
Qatari Riyal	0.1840	0.1920
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2300
Omani Riyal	1.7650	1.8200
Y.A.E. Dirham	0.1660	0.1920
Greek Drachma	0.2970	0.3270
Cypriot Pound	1.3557	1.3852

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.2800/10	Canadian dollar	1.7165/75
	1.9320/30	Deutsche mark	1.5133/40
	35.54/56	Dutch guilder	5.8690/40
	1613.05/0	French franc	107.05/15
	8.0925/25	Italian lire	7.3375/75
	6.6700/00	Japanese yen	151.50/25
One sterling	1.5015/25	Swedish crowns	3392.35/392.75
One ounce of gold		Norwegian crowns	

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Fighting continues in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Artillery duels continued in Sarajevo Friday after massive bombardments Thursday that led to the postponement of peace talks in Geneva.

The Bosnian Serbs' commander in chief, General Arko Mladic, was meanwhile leading an assault on the Bosnian army stronghold of Mount Igman, looming over Sarajevo Airport. Journalists who met him on the mountain Thursday were able to discount rumours sweeping Sarajevo that he had lost both legs in the fighting and that his deputy had been killed.

U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) commander Francis Briquemont, a Belgian general, was on his way to meet Gen. Mladic Friday in a bid to halt the week-old offensive. UNPROFOR spokesman Barry Frewer reported.

In Brussels, Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes, representing the European Community, said he would meet Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic on Aug. 2.

Mr. Claes had failed to meet Mr. Milosevic during a 36-hour visit to the Serbian capital in

which he warned that the Yugoslav Federation (comprising Serbia and Montenegro) faced further sanctions if Serb military offensives in Bosnia continued.

A senior NATO diplomat in Brussels said U.N. Secretary General Boutros Gbali had asked the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to delay its new aerial operation over Bosnia, to defend U.N. forces there, until air controllers could be deployed. Meanwhile Commander Frewer blamed Thursday's fighting — condemned by the U.N. Security Council — on "a concerted Serb attack on Sarajevo."

He said the Serbs were "putting pressure on all areas" of the besieged capital, which has been under daily bombardment for more than 15 months.

U.N. observers counted 3,777 shells fired into Sarajevo by the Bosnian Serb gunners Thursday, Mr. Frewer said. Most were on the western outskirts, which the Serbs would need to neutralise if they descended Igman to invade the city centre.

Mr. Frewer gave a provisional toll for Thursday's fighting of seven people in Sarajevo killed and 49 wounded.

On Friday, the firing continued through the morning, but at a much level lower than Thursday, where the shell-count was one of the highest since the Serbs laid siege to the valley city in April last year.

The shelling increased early afternoon to become steady at the western end of the city. A direct hit Thursday knocked out an electricity sub-station in the downtown neighbourhood of Velestici, one of only three still operating.

President Alija Izetbegovic refused Thursday to attend the talks in Geneva on dividing up this former Yugoslav republic among Serbs, Croats and Muslims.

They were to have resumed Friday, but Mr. Izetbegovic said the Muslim-dominated presidency would not attend until Serb attacks on Sarajevo and around the northeastern Serb-held town of Brcko subsided. International mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg subsequently delayed the talks until Sunday.

Fighting was continuing around Brcko Friday, Radio Sarajevo reported, while Maj. Frewer said

the Bosnian army commander in the area had reported that the Serbs were using Soviet Frog-7 ground-to-ground missiles — a first in the war.

The Brcko area forms part of a strategic Serb corridor linking Serb-held areas of northern Bosnia with Serbia.

Another of Mr. Izetbegovic's conditions — relief for the eastern Muslim enclave of Gorazde — was met Thursday when Serb women finally allowed a 10-truck convoy through. U.N. relief officials had described the blockade as an "orchestrated" campaign.

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokesman Peter Kessler said the convoy, which took in 84 tonnes of supplies for 60,000 people, was the first to get through since July 10. A relief plane dropped 59 tonnes of supplies on Gorazde overnight maj. Frewer reported.

The first convoy to reach Sarajevo since July 13 also rolled in Thursday with 140 tonnes of supplies, followed by a Bosnian Croats' decision to open the main relief route from the southern Croatian town of Metkovic.



A man checks the water level on a parking metre in front of a store in south St. Louis (AFP photo)

More rains threaten drenched midwest as U.S. Congress bickers over aid

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Neither the weather nor Washington is offering any solace to the inundated midwest as thunderstorms promise more rain and lawmakers bicker over how to pay for flood relief.

More thunderstorms, some of them strong, were developing throughout the midwest Thursday evening. Flooding rains first started in the midwest more than a month and a half ago.

Despite the human misery and repeated visits by federal officials, including President Bill Clinton, Congress could not get its act together on an emergency aid package for the flood's victims.

A dispute in the House of Representatives over how to pay for the \$3 billion assistance held up passage of the bill. A vote was not scheduled.

Flooding since the start of June has been blamed for at least 33 deaths, caused \$10 billion in damage and left 16,000 square miles (25,744 square kilometres) of farmland under water. More than 32,000 homes have been damaged, the American Red Cross estimated Thursday.

And no relief came from the Mississippi River, which held in a "flat, broad crest" for more than 200 miles (320 kilometres) from Grafton, Ill., to Cape Girardeau, Mo., said Tom Dietrich, a National Weather Service hydrologist in St. Louis.

"We really are at a crisis and we are going to be hanging up there

the next three, four, five days," Mr. Dietrich said.

But at least Des Moines had water, tap water that is, for the first time in 12 days. After they refilled the city's 810 miles (1300 kilometres) of mains and restored fire protection, officials announced at midmorning that people in one quadrant of the city could open faucets and resume flushing toilets and taking showers. By evening water service had been restored to the entire city.

River engineers are worried that hundreds of miles of saturated levees could crumble as the high water persists.

The river was at 46.9 feet (14.25 metres) Thursday at St. Louis, down slightly from the record 47.05 feet (14.33 metres) Tuesday night, Mr. Dietrich said.

He said the level will continue to fluctuate because of factors including upstream rain, levee breaks and levee repairs. Flood stage is 30 feet (9.14 metres). Downtown St. Louis is protected by a 52-foot-high (15.85-metre-high) floodwall, but a neighbourhood at the city's southern tip has been badly flooded as sandbagged levees were swept away.

One of the worst levee breaks along the Mississippi was Friday at West Quincy, Mo., last Friday that closed the last open bridge over the river for a 200-mile (320-kilometre) stretch. Dan Campbell, sheriff of Marion County, Mo., said Thursday he

will investigate whether someone deliberately broke that levee. He said water district officials were suspicious because the levee seemed to be in good condition just before the break.

In Illinois, the Mississippi River swept over an island that it created in a flood more than a century ago. After a levee blew out on the 15,000-acre (6,000-hectare) Kaskaskia Island, someone rang the town's 252-year-old "liberty bell of the west" to warn anyone who hadn't already fled.

Heavy rains also caused flooding in parts of Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and North Dakota.

Another levee broke Thursday on the Missouri River, this one protecting farmland in Saline County, Mo.

Meanwhile, nearly one in five U.S. residents believes the disastrous Mississippi River flooding is God's revenge against sinners, a new poll said Thursday.

The Cable News Network/USA Today/Gallup poll asked 1,011 respondents whether "the recent floods in the midwest are an indication of God's judgment on the people of the United States for their sinful ways."

Some 18 per cent agreed, 78 per cent disagreed and four per cent had no opinion.

On another question, 63 per cent said the U.S. government responded to the flooding as quickly as it could, while 29 per cent disagreed. The rest had no opinion.

Japan LDP sees power slipping away

TOKYO (R) — Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which lost its parliamentary majority in elections this week, saw its 38-year-long hold on power slipping away Friday when two key parties moved towards the opposition camp.

An uncommitted bloc whose votes could swing the parliamentary ballot for a new prime minister announced a platform unlikely to be acceptable to the LDP. Leaders of the Japan New Party (JNP) and the Harbinger New Party said they would insist that any government they backed should reconvene parliament in September and push through curbs on political corruption.

Their statement said parliament should act by December to introduce an electoral system combining single-seat districts with a form of proportional representation, adopt stiff anti-graft

laws and ban private firms making political donations.

These are the three pillars of a platform long sought by the opposition but always blocked by the LDP which has been in power since 1955 and is struggling to form a government by securing a working parliamentary majority. Tsutomu Hata, an LDP defector who now leads the 55-strong Japan Renewal Party and is seen as a possible coalition prime minister, welcomed the statement.

"This is very much like our own basic policy," Mr. Hata said on television. "It looks like we can form a viable government."

Last Sunday, the LDP finally lost its majority in a general election and was plunged into crisis. But with 223 seats in the 511-seat lower house it remains Japan's largest party.

"It is highly unlikely that the

LDP in its present form can agree to this platform," Masayoshi Takemura, leader of the Harbinger New Party, told a news conference.

Mr. Takemura and JNP chief Morihiro Hosokawa said they had not formally decided to commit themselves to either the LDP or the five-party opposition bloc.

However, they said they might join a coalition, going back on a pledge to stay out of government under any conditions.

Lame duck LDP Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa resigned as party president Thursday to take responsibility for the election defeat. He will stay as caretaker premier until Aug. 2 when parliament meets to choose his successor.

At an emergency LDP convention Thursday, hardliners at first moved to settle the succession issue in the old style — through backroom horse-trading.

Nicaraguan recaptures Esteli

ESTELI, Nicaragua (AP) — The Nicaraguan army recaptured this northern city after a day and a half of fierce fighting with anti-government rebels that left at least 45 people dead.

The battle was one of the worst outbreaks of fighting in Nicaragua since the civil war ended in 1990. The group of about 150 rebels "was broken up and defeated in 24 hours," Army Spokesman Lt. Col. Ricardo Wheelock told a state-owned radio station.

He reported 41 rebels, two soldiers and two civilians killed, and 98 people wounded. A nurse in the city's only hospital reported that up to 100 civilians had been treated at the crowded facility, which was overrun by rebels carrying on their battle from there.

Booming artillery and tank fire reverberated across this city of 137,000 Thursday as troops battled rebels in house to house combat. Many residents hid inside shuttered homes.

The fighting was a flareup of tensions and passions that have kept Nicaragua at war with itself to varying degrees for 14 years.

Former fighters with the two sides in the civil war — the U.S.-backed contras and the leftist Sandinistas — have teamed up in a rebel movement to protest what they say are broken promises by the government of Presi-

dent Violeta Chamorro. She promised land, tools and other support to former fighters of both sides, but much of it was never delivered.

There were varied reports, however, on the identities of the rebels in the Esteli battle. State Department spokesman Mike McCurry said in Washington that the rebels were only made up of former Sandinista soldiers, not ex-contras.

But Nicaraguan officials said that both contras and former Sandinistas were involved in the fighting in Esteli. A Rebel who identified himself as "Pedron" also told a local radio station the attack was carried out by both ex-contras and former soldiers.

"The police have become a repressive organ," he said. "People are dying of hunger and the government is doing nothing."

While the reformed former rebels have been a nuisance to the Chamorro government with recent banditry, they do not yet appear to pose a serious threat to it.

Still, Gen. Humberto Ortega, the armed forces chief, himself a former Sandinista rebel leader, vowed earlier Thursday that the rebels would be captured and dealt with harshly.

"The army will capture these

he said to reporters in Managua, the capital 60 miles to the south.

Col. Wheelock said government troops had captured 59 of the rebels.

At least 150 rebels were involved in the fighting, which started Wednesday when attackers plundered three banks, a supermarket and attacked police stations.

The rebels said they were led by a former Sandinista army major, Victor Manuel Gallegos Hernandez. Col. Wheelock said he and his aides were believed to have fled south with \$4 million robbed from banks.

It was not clear Thursday whether the attack on Esteli — the scene of occasional rebel attacks — was an isolated action or part of a larger campaign.

Rebels took over the city's only hospital, firing from the facility's windows and doors, as medics ducked and dozens of wounded civilians spilled from crowded rooms and into corridors.

The rebels Thursday released the Nicaraguan ambassador to Honduras after capturing him Wednesday as they drove along the Panamerican Highway near Esteli, according to the government. Honduran officials said Noel Rivas Gasteazoro, 72, was released unharmed. The fates of his wife and driver, also captured, were not specified.

French student takes expensive Scottish taxi

EDINBURGH (R) — A French student was taken for an expensive ride when he arrived at Edinburgh Airport, Scottish media reported. Hotel Catering Manager Hugues Flaughnatt flew from Paris to Edinburgh for an English language course. At the airport the driver of an unmarked car asked him if he wanted a taxi. Mr. Flaughnatt was taken eight miles (13 km) to his address in central Edinburgh, where the driver said the fare was £148 (\$224) — 10 times the usual fare. He thought that was expensive but, unused to the currency, paid up.

Photo forces British prison to fit new locks

LONDON (R) — A British prison spent up to £85,000 (\$128,600) on new locks after inmates saw a closeup photograph of the governor unlocking a cell and copied the keys, a newspaper said. Today newspaper said criminals at Blakenhurst Prison in central England pounced on the picture and got to work. "The governor might as well have slipped replicas under the cell doors. The lads couldn't believe their luck," a prison source was quoted as saying. The photograph of Governor David Brooke brandishing the keys, taken during an open day for visitors, was printed by a local paper which was circulated in the prison. "In this case it appears necessary for some, if not all, of the cells to be fitted with new locks," a government spokesman told the newspaper.

Landowners warn of poor grouse shooting season

EDINBURGH (R) — Landowners in the Scottish highlands warned that the 1993 grouse shooting season would be poor, with serious economic consequences for rural communities. Richard Cook, a senior official of the Game Conservancy, said the season starting on Aug. 12 would have a below average number of birds for the fifth year in a row. Overseas visitors make up 80 per cent of grouse shooting parties and bring in about £23 million (\$34.7 million) a year for Britain. Mr. Cook said the number of birds had been declining for 50 years and many Scottish landowners had converted their moors to other uses, such as forestry. "Disney Bland, chairman of the 4,000-strong Scottish Landowners' Federation, said Gamekeepers risked losing their jobs — a blow to the environment and natural heritage."

British couple try to 'unadopt' problem child

LONDON (R) — A British couple is trying to revoke their adoption of a boy from a children's home who they say has grown into an uncontrollable and violent youth because of early sexual abuse, the Independent reported. The parents are applying to the courts to overturn a 1987 adoption order on the grounds that they were unaware of the boy's troubled history when they agreed to take him. "By the time he left us we had given our all. We were physically, emotionally and financially broken," the father was quoted as saying. The boy, now 13, had to be put in local authority care and now lives in a secure institution.

Wrong twin jailed for slashing stepmother's throat

NEW YORK (R) — In a bizarre case of mistaken identity, police arrested and jailed the wrong identical twin for assaulting and sodomising his stepmother, who could not tell the two 16-year-old boys apart. The Manhattan district attorney revealed the incident but provided few details about the attack in New York City in which the woman's throat was slashed. New York Newsday, a New York daily paper, quoted law enforcement sources as saying investigators realised the mistake when they found small knife marks on the other brother's hands.

Stop wine-ing

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Community will have more than 15 bottles of surplus wine in store for every man, woman and child in the bloc by the end of the century and Farm Commissioner Rene Steichen says it's time to get rid of it. The Community accounts for 60 per cent of world wine production but its citizens are drinking less wine, imports are rising and exports stagnating. Schemes to cut wine output by digging up vineyards are being swamped by rising yield resulting from new production methods. The commission wants to see farmers paid more to dig up vineyards. "The EC produces too much wine," Mr. Steichen said.



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French League rules out demoting Marseille

PARIS (Agencies) — The French Football League said Friday it would impose its own sanctions in response to the Olympique Marseille match-rigging scandal within a fortnight but ruled out demoting the champions to division two.

Noel Le Graet, the league president, said he was sure Marseille would "begin and end the 1993-94 season" in division one. But he was much more guarded about whether Marseille would be allowed to defend their European Champions Cup crown.

The League's move came despite indications that the legal proceedings surrounding the alleged attempt by Marseille General Manager Jean-Pierre Bernes to bribe opponents last season would drag on for months. Bernes, who is accused of trying to bribe three Valenciennes players to take it easy during a match on May 20, was released conditionally from custody Thursday.

He denies any involvement in the affair but is accused by Valenciennes midfielder Jean-Jacques Eydelie as well as the three Valenciennes players.

Eydelie claims he acted as a go-between between Bernes and the Valenciennes players. Two of them, Jorge Burruchaga and Christophe Robert, have been charged with corruption, as well as Robert's wife Marie-Christine. Police have recovered 240,000 francs (\$44,000) of a sum given to Robert.

State prosecutor Eric de Montfollier, who objected to Bernes being released, predicted there would be no important developments in the case before the autumn.

"There will be a slowing down, but only compared with a month of galloping," he said.

The league was decided however that the legal authorities had come up with enough evidence for them to make decisions about the professional futures of the



Jacques Glassman (right) who revealed bribes contacts from the Olympique Marseille arrives at the Valenciennes Justice Hall for the first confrontation with the protagonists of the scandal (AFP photo)

players involved. Eydelie, Burruchaga and Robert will be heard from Monday. The football authorities are also hoping to speak to Bernes.

The strain of the affair showed signs of telling on Marseille President Bernard Tapie, who now faces a second lot of charges related to the affair.

France 3-Mediterranean, part of the public France-3 chain, said Friday it would be pressing criminal damage charges after an incident Thursday when Tapie allegedly threw a television camera into the Mediterranean.

The crew were trying to film Bernes on Tapie's yacht, the Phoebe, off Hyeres after his release from custody.

According to the television chain, Tapie and his parliamentary aide Marc Frattini left the Phoebe aboard a lifeboat. They boarded the journalists vessel and despite the warnings of Frattini, Tapie grabbed the 240,000 (\$41,000) camera and threw it in the water. The equipment sank to the bottom and could not be

recovered. The Journalists' Trades Union later said it would also be bringing an action against Tapie for attempting to restrict the freedom of the press.

Mr. Tapie, minister for towns in the Socialist administration that lost power earlier this year, also faces defamation charges after comparing the methods of the examining magistrate in the case to those of the Nazi Gestapo.

The next step in the investigation, due next week, is a hearing for former Valenciennes trainer Boro Primorac in front of the examining magistrate. Primorac has accused Tapie of asking him to carry the can for the affair.

Meanwhile in an interview with the Marseille daily Le Provençal after his release, Bernes again proclaimed his innocence and said the entire affair was aimed at discrediting Tapie.

"You cannot prove something that isn't true," Bernes was quoted as saying. "It's not me they are after in this affair, they want to get Bernard Tapie."

Bernes said his arrest and detention were the worst experience in his life but he had kept going thanks to the support of his friends and above all Tapie "who has been remarkable."

Bernes, whose conditions of release were that he does not leave the country or contact the other suspects and witnesses in the case, said he hoped to attend Marseille's first match of the new season at home to Lens Saturday night.

Marseille's players hope to shift the spotlight away from their club's alleged involvement in the bribery scandal when they begin their quest for a record sixth consecutive French League title.

"All we ask is to be able to do our job in a calm atmosphere," captain Didier Deschamps said ahead of the European champions' first match at home.

"I think the Marseille players are strong enough mentally to make the best possible start to our championship," said League President Le Graet.

China scorns U.S. meddling in Peking 2000 Olympic bid

PEKING (R) — China Friday rebuffed U.S. lawmakers for trying to derail Peking's bid to host the 2000 Olympics on human rights grounds, calling the effort a purely political undermining of Olympic ideals.

Chinese Olympic Committee President He Zhenliang also argued strongly for awarding the 27th Olympiad to a developing country like China, saying all but two of the 22 modern games have been held in developed countries.

"If the Olympics belong only to the rich countries, then the games have no future," he told a Peking Foreign Correspondents' Club luncheon.

On human rights, he repeated China's standard defence that lives have improved vastly under communism and that no country — not even the United States — has a perfect record.

But he added that such considerations do not apply to selection of host cities for the Olympic Games.

"The Olympics is a movement to gather the youth of the world without distinctions of colour, race, ideology and religious beliefs," he said.

"If you put all the political, religious, racial and colour problems into that, the Olympic movement will be destroyed."

He chastised as "purely political" interference the resolutions put before the U.S. Congress on July 15, which urged the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to reject Peking when members select the 27th Olympiad host city on Sept. 23.

"I'm totally against this because it is an infringement of Olympic principles. It is unacceptable," he said.

U.S. sponsors of the bills argued that by seeking the 2000 games, China was trying to divert attention from what they called its repressive human rights record.

He denied knowing of anyone being arrested for opposing China's bid, although one man is known to have been detained in April for trying to organise an anti-games campaign.

He argued that popular opposition, though existing, was minuscule, citing a survey of 10,000 Peking residents showing that 98.7 per cent endorse hosting the games.

He aimed a personal barb at what he called questionable U.S. human rights policy, saying U.S. authorities had four times denied a visa for his young niece to visit her mother and sisters, who are living in the United States.

"No country is perfect," he said. "The United States ... also has human rights problems but is this a reason to deny it the right to stage the (1996) Olympic Games in Atlanta?"

He rejected suggestions that China was using questionable methods to win votes from the 91 International Olympic Committee members who will decide the Peking bid's fate.

He acknowledged that China had paid for visits to Peking by 64 of the 91 International Olympic Committee members but said this was normal practice.

He also said China had financed the building of 34 sports facilities in developing countries, but said this was part of China's foreign policy and that the programme had been in place for many years before Peking made its Olympic bid.

Abdouraparov takes 2nd win in Tour De France

BORDEAUX, France (Agencies) — Djambolud Abdouraparov of Uzbekistan won his second stage victory of the Tour De France with a powerful final sprint in Bordeaux Friday.

Abdouraparov easily outdistanced his rivals in the last 100 metres of the 200.5-km 18th stage from Orthez but almost blew his chances by raising his arms in triumph too soon.

Seeing his opponents closing fast, the Uzbek hastily grabbed his handlebars again and pedalled over the line for a win to add to his victory in the third stage at Dinard.

American Frankie Andreu was second and Rolf Sorensen of Denmark third.

The three were in a group of just over 20 riders who broke away in the latter part of the stage.

Race leader Miguel Indurain finished in the main peloton almost five minutes later but retained his leader's yellow jersey with just two stages of the race left.

With only Saturday's time trial and a gentle run into Paris Sunday to come, Indurain's cushion of 4min 28secs looks extremely comfortable — particularly since the Spaniard is almost unbeatable in solo rides against the clock.

Few would have bet against Indurain completing his Tour De France hat-trick this year — including his greatest rivals.

Only Swiss duo Tony Rominger and Alex Zülle, winner and runner-up in the Tour of Spain, have shown the confidence to make a challenge.

But after Indurain came safely through the final mountain stage Thursday, with a cushion of nearly four and a half minutes intact, there appears little that can be done to stop him taking another victory this weekend.

In contrast to the attitude of the Swiss, the highly-rated Ita-

lians seemed certain of defeat even before the first stage had started.

Claudio Chiappucci declared Indurain was unbeatable, while Gianni Bugno was crestfallen after his failure in the Tour of Italy, won inevitably by the Spaniard.

The only hope was that Indurain, now unbeaten in a record five consecutive major tour events in Italy and France, might crack in the mountains after he had looked vulnerable near the end of the Giro this year.

Rominger and Zülle also needed what luck was going, instead, Indurain looked as strong as ever — and fortune went his way as well.

First Rominger, who had already lost two key teammates, was hit by a time penalty in the team time trial, and then Zülle fell badly, losing two minutes.

Indurain saw his chance and blew the race apart during three key stages.

First he annihilated the opposition in his favourite discipline, the individual time trial, taking the yellow jersey despite a puncture at the end of the 59km 9th stage at Lac de Madone.

Then, when everybody expected him to sit back and wait for a counter-attack — Indurain's last two Tour wins have been based solely on time trial successes backed up by solid defensive riding — he attacked immediately in the mountains.

His offensive in the first mountainous stage of the race on July 14 — Bastille Day — splintered the entire field.

That performance was followed by an equally virtuoso ride the next day and the race was effectively over at the halfway mark.

Only Rominger managed to keep up in the Alps, but by then the Swiss rider was so far behind overall that he needed to break the leader, not match him, if he was to win.

Mexico trounce Jamaica 6-1 to reach CONCACAF final

MEXICO CITY (R) — Mexico trounced Jamaica 6-1 in the semi-finals of the CONCACAF Gold Cup Thursday to set up a tantalising showdown with the U.S. national team in Sunday's final.

Cheered on by a near-capacity crowd of more than 90,000 in the mighty Azteca Stadium, Mexico ran rings around their hapless visitors and were clearly out to repeat last week's 9-0 drubbing of Martinique and 8-0 slaughter of Canada.

Luis Miguel Salvador opened the floodgates in the ninth minute, banging home an awkward ball from close range by the right-hand post with the Jamaican defence split hopelessly open.

Octavio Mora made it two in the 14th minute, combining neatly with Salvador on the edge of the goal area to slide the ball in from an acute angle.

Hector Wright pulled one back for Jamaica during a counter-attack in the 17th minute, powering through the Mexican defence to blast past keeper Jorge Campos from the edge of the penalty area.

But Salvador struck back twice within 20 minutes, heading in from close range in the 18th and snaffling a poor clearance by Bar-

lington Gaynor in the 35th to complete his hat-trick.

He could have had four but telegraphed a weak, mis-hit penalty kick to the Jamaican keeper's left in the 43rd minute that Warren Barrett had little difficulty saving.

Luis Roberto Alves, who bagged a record seven goals in the 9-0 demolition of Martinique, showed Salvador how it is done with a well-placed penalty kick in the 50th minute that made it 5-1.

Six minutes later Ignacio Ambriz connected with a headed cross from the far post by Salvador to complete the rout.

Mexico, in festive mood, then brought on substitute goalkeeper Alejandro Garcia to allow eccentric number one keeper Campos to play as a forward for the rest of the match.

Campos kept the crowd amused with a series of runs up the right wing, and even hit the post with 10 minutes to go, but was not able to do any more damage to a ragged visiting side.

Mexico now face the United States in Sunday's final in the Azteca, while Costa Rica and Jamaica will play for third and fourth place.

Boardman smashes world cycling hour record

BORDEAUX, France (AFP) — Britain's Chris Boardman smashed the world cycling hour record here Friday — then announced his next target could be to turn professional.

Boardman became the first man to go through the 5-km barrier, beating the record set only last week by Scotland's Graeme Obree in Norway.

The Barcelona Olympic pursuit gold medalist completed 52,706.2 km in the 60 minutes to beat Obree's 51,596 km.

Boardman said afterwards: "I am really happy, it is indescribable."

"The goal was to reach 53km but that wasn't possible because of the humidity, made worse by the stadium lights, and the air pressure."

Asked what he planned to do next, Boardman said he would compete in the World Championships in Norway to August, adding: "Then perhaps I will turn professional next year and try and win some prologues — but I realise the Tour de France is much bigger than anything I have done before."

"I will leave the world hour record now but if somebody beats it, I will try and get it back."

Boardman said he had been keen to attempt the hour record before current Tour De France leader Miguel Indurain, because he is convinced the Spaniard could post a new mark beyond anybody else's reach.

"If a racer like Indurain does it, I think he will smash all my marker times."

He added: "We expected Obree to break the record. I was very surprised he didn't do it the first time."

"But I couldn't believe that he got up and did it the next day but I didn't let that worry me too much."

At the 40km stage, with trainer Peter Keen keeping him perfectly informed of his progress, he had a comfortable 33 seconds in hand and there was little doubt that the record was doomed — the only question was if he could force himself through the 52km barrier.

The efforts of Obree and Boardman have now extended the hour record by 1.119 km from the mark that Francesco Moser set, at altitude, in 1984.

One of the first react to the new mark was former five-times winner of the Tour de France Bernard Hinault.

The Frenchman said: "I'm surprised by the distance he beat the old record. Nearly 700 metres — that's enormous."

"He achieved that because he is a top-class rider who prepared himself scientifically."

"This record can be compared to those of Moreckx and Moser. Today I can only see Indurain being able to take it higher. Before, the target was 50km, now it's 55."

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HUSCH
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠Q86 ♠A74 ♠KQJ10983 ♠Void
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 2 ♠

What action do you take?
A.—There are a number of things you want to do—show your club void, your spade support and the source of your tricks in diamonds. A cue-bid now could result in enemy pre-emptive action, leaving you badly placed. A forcing response of two diamonds now is the more prudent course—you can get aggressive later.

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠K64 ♠Q976 ♠Q6 ♠AQ84
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Dbl ?

What action do you take?
A.—You have reasonable support for partner's suit, but a dead minimum opening bid. There's one action that describes this hand perfectly—pass. We frown upon anything else.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠Q976 ♠K64 ♠Q6 ♠AQ84
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Dbl ?

What action do you take?
A.—Almost as identical hand to the second problem, except that the major suits have been reversed. Here your four-card fit for partner's suit improves your hand enormously. Even the Law of Total Tricks strongly dictates that you should raise to two spades.

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠5 ♠A7653 ♠QJ832 ♠72
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
2 ♠ 2 ♠ Dbl ?
(*—weak)

What action do you take?
A.—Your opponents certainly make game, perhaps even slam, so it's simply a matter of whether you should interfere with their auction and, if so, at what level. Our choice would be to act aggressively, and we feel five hearts makes life most difficult for the enemy.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠87 ♠AJ94 ♠A109643 ♠8
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump and East passes. What do you bid now?

A.—The problem with a jump to three diamonds is that partner might rebid three no trump with a four-card heart suit—a bid of any suit in this sequence would be a cue-bid confirming diamond support and a maximum. The way to probe for a suit contract is to start with two clubs, to check on the possibility of a 4-4 heart fit, and then proceed with three diamonds, which would be forcing.

Q.6—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A872 ♠K ♠10765 ♠J854
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Dbl ?

What action do you take?
A.—Had there been no takeout double, you would, of course, have responded to partner's opening bid with one spade. However, the double has told you that East's suit, and you don't want to jockey the opponents out of spades. To up the ante a little, we suggest you respond one no trump, although we won't quibble mightily with a pass.

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	THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.	STALLONE — IN Dolby Stereo CLIFFHANGER Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30	Al Pacino — in SCENT OF A WOMAN Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9 p.m.	For the first time in Amman you have a date with the National Palestinian Theatre — the Gaza Strip — in a play entitled: The Assassination of Hamshah by artist Saeed Bitar Shows on Friday and Saturday, June 4 and 5 at 8:30 p.m. Please book seats in advance	AHLAN NABIL AND HISHAM THEATRE The theatre will be closed in preparation for "Ahlam Arab Summit" play which will be shown at the Jerash Festival for Culture and Arts.			

